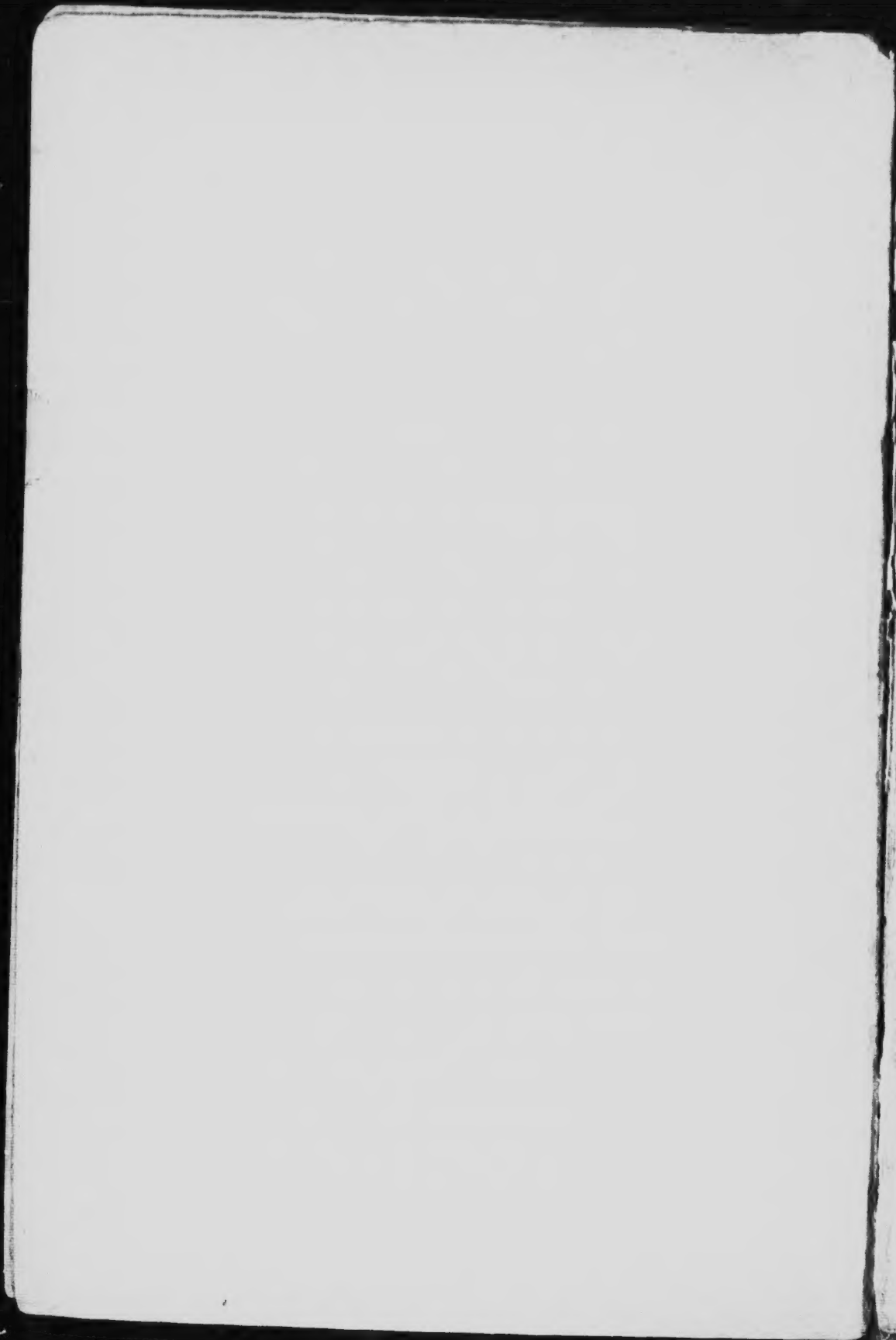


YEARS IN THE EMPEROR'S ARMY AN EX-OFFICER





MY YEARS IN THE KAISER'S
ARMY

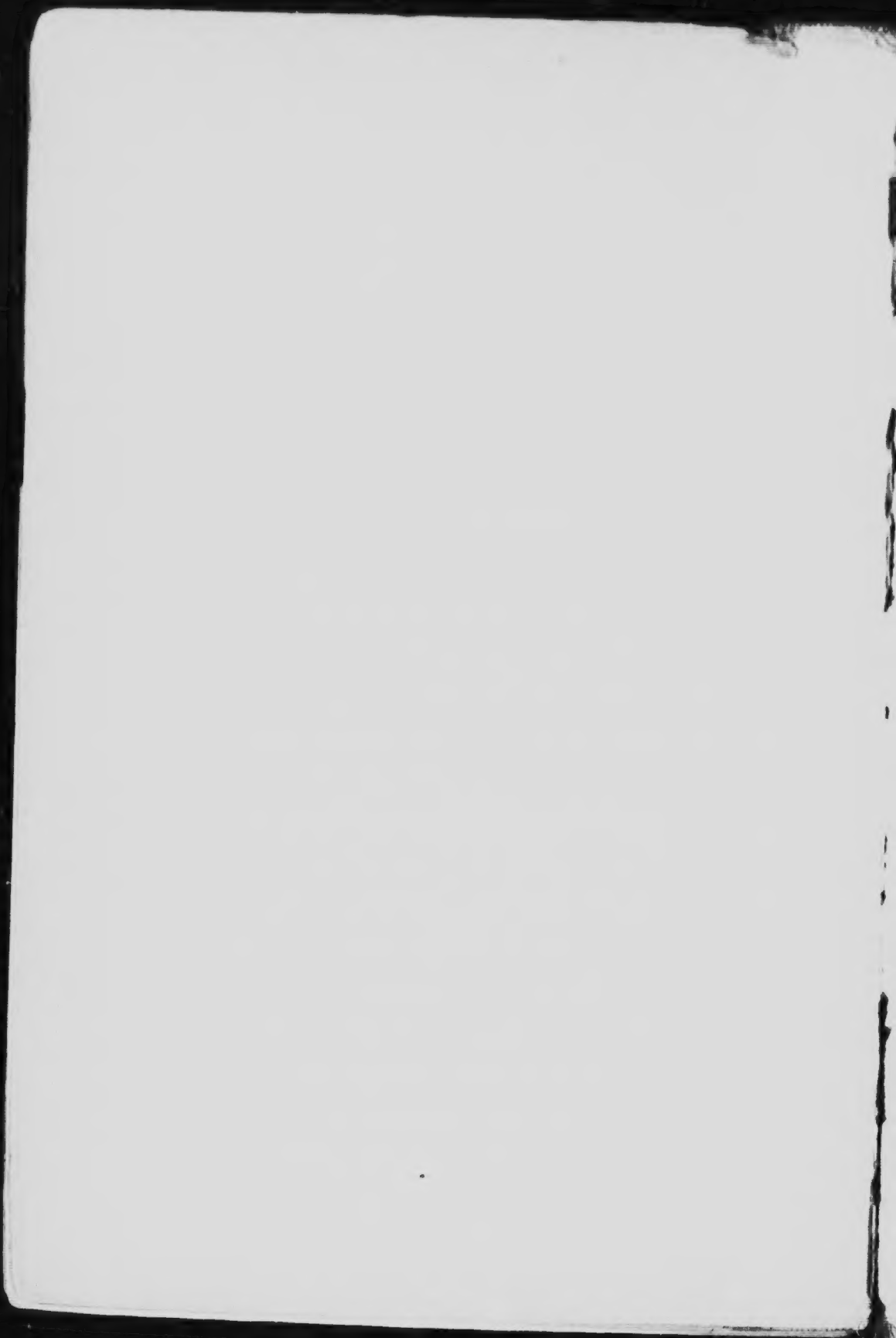


My Years in the Kaiser's Army

By
AN EX-OFFICER



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PREFACE

THE German of to-day is what his forbears were who wandered in the dark shadows of the Black Forest. He is an atavistic throw-back. He possesses no virtue but that of bravery, and fights because he is periodically obsessed with the old Teutonic blood lust. Jaurès aptly described the modern German when he said that, beneath a thin veneer of civilisation, there lurks the soul of a wolf. Brutal thought and brutal action have been deliberately developed on the axiom that the best brute makes the most efficient soldier. Left alone to evolve on peaceful lines, the German might have reached the stage of civilisation of the West European. But all moral springs in his soul have been dammed, and the result is to be seen in bleeding Belgium, or ravished Poland or Serbia; everywhere, indeed, where the German Eagle has thrust in its talons.

It is good that men should know the evil against which they fight. To this end I have

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written this book, which is intended to be an answer to the oft-repeated question: "What manner of men are these?" The subject matter consists of recollections of my period of service as Instructor in Foreign Languages in the German Army, a period ended only by the outbreak of the war.

THE AUTHOR.

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Robertson

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CHAPTER I

THE GERMAN ARMY TO-DAY

MUCH has been written concerning the German Army and its formation, but in order to treat with the attention it deserves, I may, perhaps, be allowed to digress from my narrative.

To whom belongs the honour of having burdened the world with conscription has never yet been decided. Previous to the war, in the then academic writings on this subject, the blame was laid on soldiers so wide apart as Julius Cæsar and Napoleon. Latterly, however, General von Stein has been charged; mostly by persons who have an unclear conception of Prussian military history, though von Stein certainly shouldered the responsibility as far as Prussia was concerned. After the disastrous treaty of Tilsit,

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Prussia ceased to exist as an autonomous State, and it was only with great difficulty and by the exercise of unexampled tact that Queen Louise was able to induce Napoleon to permit Prussia to retain a standing army of twelve thousand men.

Stein at that period occupied the position which nowadays would be considered as equivalent to that of War Minister. He was clever, and had the Hunnish contempt for agreements either written or verbal. Napoleon had agreed to twelve thousand soldiers. Stein sent his agents—forerunners of the ubiquitous German spies of to-day—into every town and every village that lay within the confines of Prussia, with instructions to furnish him with a complete record of every able-bodied man capable of bearing arms. He soon had what was virtually a national register, and he called to the colours his twelve thousand men. He trained them, as far as possible, in the various branches of military science, and after a few months had elapsed he discharged these soldiers and called up a further twelve thousand. It has been calculated that, after one year, he had, in addition to the twelve thousand permitted, a trained body

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of reserves, amounting to close on forty thousand. He executed his cynical outrage on Napoleon's permission with such telling effect that, after the retreat from Moscow, Napoleon found his way to France and safety blocked by a force of almost a quarter of a million well-trained soldiers—quite a respectable army for those days. Von Stein's cleverness was repaid at the battle of Leipzig.

This was the first scientific development of a national army, and the idea was carried farther by the Prussian Staff in the campaigns of 1864, 1866 and 1870, during the latter of which Helmuth von Moltke showed himself the superior of the old von Stein.

The present-day German Army may be considered as being divided into five distinct parts: (1) Standing army; (2) Landwehr Erstes Aufgebot; (3) Landwehr Zweites Aufgebot; (4) Landsturm Erstes Aufgebot; and (5) Landsturm Zweites Aufgebot. The word "Aufgebot" is the technical German expression for "levy," divided into "Erstes" (first) and "Zweites" (second). Every German male is liable for military service on attaining his majority. In point of fact, however, only approximately twenty-five per cent. of

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the available material is taken. The day on which these youths are called on to present themselves for military service is called "die Ausmusterung," and they can be seen walking through the streets of their district town, gaily decorated with flowers, nearly every one of them in a state of partial intoxication. The rejections take place after a strenuous medical examination by a military board, and the decision is marked on the military papers, which have previously been distributed by the police. In order that no more may be enrolled than has been allowed by the Reichstag, the doctors pass those who, either by their manner or their conversation, show an objection to service. Those who are known as anti-militarists or conscientious objectors are thus given an opportunity of experiencing the benefits of the German military system, while the youths who profess their loyalty, and of whom the Camarilla is certain, are allowed to return home.

The period of service differs according to the various sections. Legally it is fixed at two years for the infantry, thirty-six months for the cavalry and artillery, and twenty-four months for the technical regiments, such as the Engineers and Pioneers.

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Although no definite rule to this effect has been laid down, well-conducted conscripts can obtain, at the discretion of the Great General Staff, a remission ranging from six to two months. This is the modern German adaptation of von Stein's tricks. The standing army comprises 544,211 privates and non-commissioned officers, besides which the numerous German officers and reserve officers must be reckoned. When the War Office prematurely release 10,000 soldiers, an equivalent number of conscripts are called up, thus securing an addition to the standing army other than that allowed by law. Youths who have passed their matriculation examination receive a certificate entitling them to serve only one year. These "One-Year Volunteers," as they are called (in point of fact they are conscripts), are not compelled to live during their entire service in the barracks, but are allowed to live in apartments. Parents who are afraid to run the certain risk of the moral contamination of the barracks often utilise this method. The huge number of these "Einjährige" form the material for the reserve officers. The regular officers' corps are composed exclusively of the sons of the old Prussian Junker families. Concerning the non-commis-

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sioned officers I shall write more fully in a later chapter.

The Germany Army is composed of twenty-five army corps, of which three are Bavarians, two Saxon, one Würtemburger, and nineteen Prussian. An army corps comprises 651 infantry battalions, 516 cavalry squadrons, 633 field artillery batteries, the rest being made up of technical troops. These army corps are placed in positions of strategical value, the bulk being directed against France, and the next in importance on the Russian border. The army is controlled by the Grosser General Stab (Great General Staff), acting through the District Staffs of the various corps. The apparent head is the Kaiser, who is the War Lord of Germany. The real head is the Chief of the Staff. Although it has no existence in law, the actual military dictators of Germany are the members of the Camarilla, of which I shall speak later. This explanation should enable my readers to follow the thread of the narrative of my experiences in Germany.

I have devoted myself mostly to a description of the innermost side of army life, and have made no comments on the value of the German soldier as compared with the "Tommy" of

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England or the "poilu" of France. The question of superiority is one that is now being fought out on the fair lands of France, and though there can be no doubt of the results proving the fallacy of the German theory of military education, no one is likely to be more pleased ultimately than the conscripts who have sweated blood during their years of service in Germany's barracks.

CHAPTER II

A FATEFUL MORNING

It was in the winter of 1910 that I crossed the Belgo-German frontier on my way to Aachen. I had just passed my examination in Germanic philology at the university of Louvain, and in the congenial company of two other students—one a Belgian and the other a German—I had determined to give myself a mad holiday after my strenuous academic tussle with the German philologists.

The masked ball at the Kaiserhof was a delightfully uproarious affair. Gregorius—the German student—had introduced me to several gay young Saxon lieutenants come to see how the Rhinelanders make merry. We were a happy party, always increasing with the advent of more hot-headed students from Bonn, and by the time we had drifted down to the "Germania" restaurant I had half decided to remain in Germany. The lieutenants were madcaps, and, at their suggestion,

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we proceeded to Cologne, where the fun became more furious.

Here the seal was put on my half resolution to have finished with Louvain, for they advised me to have nothing more to do with philology, but to enjoy life as official instructor in English to the officers of the Prussian Army. They were really very kind and overloaded me with letters of introduction to officers in Berlin.

One fateful morning I was summoned to the Kriegsministerium in Leipzigerstrasse, and after what seemed an interminable wait, I was brought to a room occupied by a dapper little Oberleutnant wearing the broad red stripes which proclaimed him to be attached to the General Staff. Clicking his bespurred heels he barked, "von Kopf." But I was not dismayed. I knew this to be the German manner of introducing oneself to a stranger. He informed me that on the strength of my diplomas and recommendations, His Majesty the King and Kaiser had been graciously pleased to appoint me Official Instructor in English to the Officers of his Army.

Simultaneously with this intimation, which he proclaimed in the voice of an old-time herald, he handed me a contract in which my duties

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were outlined and the emoluments set out. One last formality had to be complied with. I had to go to the Prussian Ministry of Education, where, in consideration of my paying the modest fee of three marks, I would receive a supplementary certificate to the effect that I was a person of good character and morals. I suppose they did not wish to run the risk of having their officers contaminated.

I had arranged to meet von Kopf in the afternoon, and having successfully obtained the certificate as to my morals, wended my way to Dressler's wine restaurant. Von Kopf overflowed with many-worded sympathy when he heard that I had received orders to present myself forthwith to the colonel in charge of the Torgau Garrison. He volubly assured me that Torgau was a horrible hole to live in; that it was on the black list of every Prussian officer, and, worst of all, there was not a good-looking woman in the place. But, as a consolation, he informed me that I would meet with some wild spirits, especially among the junior officers, many of whom had been sent in disgrace from the more popular garrisons on account of some foolish escapades. He implored me to have nothing to do with the

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artillery or infantry, but, by hook or by crook, to get myself attached to the Blue Hussars (the proper title is the Torgauer Husaren, but on account of the colour of their uniform—blue with white facings—the "Blue Hussars" is the more favoured name).

Von Kopf carried his kindness so far as to give me a letter of introduction to Freiherr von Ziedlitz, the officer commanding the Hussars, conjuring him to reserve my services for his own regiment, and to keep me unsullied from the officers of the infantry and artillery. With a sinking heart I left Berlin for Torgau. After what von Kopf told me, it could only be a dead-and-alive little village, but I consoled myself with the thought that Leipzig was not far away, and that by the express one could reach Berlin in a few hours.

On arrival I drove up with my luggage to the Hotel Zum Alten Fritz. All its guests were military men, mostly young subalterns and a few Einjährige. It adjoined the barracks and was opposite the officers' casino, where I had to report myself. On presenting myself there, I found that von Ziedlitz was in his rooms in the barracks, whither I went under the guidance of an orderly.

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But evidently the sentry had some suspicion of an Englishman who would voluntarily come to "Dismal Torgau," as he called it, and he refused to allow me to proceed till a soldier had come from the guardroom to act as escort. Now that he had rendered it impossible for me to play any pranks, he was contented, and away we went, one in front, the other behind.

I would have liked to observe everything, but they gave me no opportunity, for they hustled me across the square, through dark passages and up steep staircases, till we reached the landing on which the colonel's rooms were situated.

The fellows' assurance deserted them at this stage; both of them looked as if they sincerely regretted accompanying me, and it was with much diffidence that the orderly knocked at the door. No response coming, he knocked again a little louder, then made bold to open the door.

At that moment there came from within a torrent of invective which would have made a bargee weep with envy. One blast of "Donnerwetter nochmals, Du verfluchter Schweinehund" (it would be impossible to render this affectionate greeting into polite English), and the orderly

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ignominiously turned tail and fled, leaving me with the sentry, who seemed to be suffering from an acute attack of the palsy.

In a hoarse and trembling whisper he informed me that the Baron was always a little hasty if his afternoon slumbers were disturbed. If this was being a little hasty, I wondered what the Baron would be capable of were he to become really angry.

Now and again we could hear rumblings, as of distant thunder, in the room, and when we caught one of his phrases, such as "Schafskopf" or "Verdammtter Keil," the sentry trembled like an aspen leaf. He evidently had visions of fourteen days' "strong arrest" before him, for as soon as he heard the rattling on the door-knob, he manœuvred into position behind me, and left me to receive the full force of the torrent of the Baron's wrath.

I shall never forget the latter's look of dismay when I gave him the regulation obeisance and mentioned that I was the bearer of a letter of introduction from von Kopf. His rout was complete, but for a long time I could feel that the Baron was still in a state of ebullition.

The orderly reappeared to make us tea, but

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he moved about as if in fear of his life. Several times I caught the Baron gazing banefully at him, but out of politeness to me he did not let himself go. Otherwise he seemed a nice old gentleman, bordering on fifty, and as full of fun of a sort as the youngest of his lieutenants.

He was a bachelor, and it became rather embarrassing for me when he began to indulge in reminiscences about his female friends in Berlin and Leipzig. I tried to bring him round by asking about my duties, but he assured me that he did not know and did not care. He was a soldier of the old school and a fighter, and had won his promotion in Africa, where all the junior officers should go. He welcomed me as a break in the monotony, and was childishly delighted that I could play tennis.

And the hoary old sinner went on to hold a review of all his amorous conquests—and they were many. When I was taking leave he told me of all the nobles in his regiment, and assured me that I would have a roseate time with the Blue Hussars.

I was halfway down the stairs when he ran after me to say that his officers were having a "Liebesmahl" that night in the casino, and if

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I would come he would introduce me at once to everyone connected with the regiment. I had often heard of the wild junketings of the German officers, and I gladly accepted his invitation to the "Liebesmahl," which was to be my debut as teacher in the Germany Army.

CHAPTER III

THE OFFICERS' LOVE-FEAST

AFTER my conversation with the old Bavarian colonel, I felt much more optimistic regarding Torgau than at any time since my fate'ul interview with von Kopf at the War Office in Berlin. It has not been given to many civilians to attend a Prussian Liebesmahl—much less to foreigners—and I could only ascribe my good luck in being invited, to the colonel's eagerness to have finished with the formalities of my introduction to his officers.

The orderly, now submissive to the Englishman who had tamed his master, was profuse in his offers of service to show me a few places of amusement in the town, but I declined.

I returned to my hotel and ascended to my room in order to make myself nice (as the Germans say) for the approaching festival.

At first I was somewhat puzzled at the title, but later I understood that Liebesmahl was its

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proper name, for it was a mixture of a full-mess dinner, a German academical beer supper, and the Saturnalian festivities of the old Greeks.

Egon, a young lieutenant with whom I had quickly become acquainted, had successfully piloted me through most of the introductions, when a dapper, oldish Oberst (colonel) approached us, and, clicking his heels together, bawled, "von Eichenstein."

I copied his performance with all ceremony and seriousness, and our introduction was thus completed.

Then came the critical moment, when he presented me to his "woman," as he called his wife. She was a languid beauty who, from her appearance, must have caused her husband many an anxious moment, but was attractive withal. In the English way, I held out my hand to her, which she accepted. Von Eichenstein became very impolite; but I paid no attention, as I believed that it was merely the ebullition of his natural boorishness. From what Egon told me later, it seemed that I had a very narrow escape, for the Oberst only desisted from his desire to challenge me to a pistol duel at the wish of Count von Roth.

Poor old von Eichenstein was extremely

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jealous, and with reason, for his "woman" was given to kicking over the matrimonial traces, and preferably with foreigners.

"We only shake hands with a lady when we are *very* intimate," said Egon, emphasising the "very" in such a manner that his meaning was perfectly clear.

It took me a long time to convince von Eichenstein that I was above suspicion. Besides, it was too dangerous—he was a capital shot.

It gave me a shock, accustomed as I was to the extreme reserve of the Belgian women, to note the laughter of the officers' wives at some very pointed witticisms that were bandied from one to another in the course of the evening. All the officers were scions of the noble families of the Mark of Brandenburg, but their wives were recruited entirely from the commercial families that sprang into sudden opulence after the Franco-Prussian War.

And the reason is not far to seek. As there is no caste more exclusive than the Prussian military caste, so also is there none more impoverished, with the consequence that a marriage with an "outsider" is an absolute necessity.

The Prussian Army regulations decree that no

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subaltern shall marry unless his parents-in-law can deposit such a capital as will bring in a yearly income of at least £500. This deposit, which is supplementary to the usual "Mitgift," or dowry, is placed in the Army Bank, and the proceeds of the investment are devoted exclusively to the personal needs of the officer. The net result is that in ninety per cent. of the marriages the woman sells herself for a position in society.

The marriage bureau in Berlin, conducted under the patronage of the German War Office, issues a weekly list, which is supplied, through the usual official channels, to the officers' corps of the different regiments. This is generally affixed inside the smoking-room, and it is at once amusing and tragic to observe how the officers peruse it as carefully as the financier reads the latest 'Change report.

I have seen women in many countries, but I have yet to find them so completely emancipated from moral control as were the wives of those Prussian officers. The officers, too, were free and easy, to say the least of it, and became more so as the night wore on. One could see them making maudlin love in no restrained fashion to the wives and womenfolk of their brother officers.

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Towards the end of the "meal of love" the colonel's wife had walked me into the conservatory, where she treated me to a long dissertation from Plato on the soul. As I was unresponsive, she wandered from more abstract matters to things of this earth. She was much addicted to metaphysics, and confessed her great desire to perfect her knowledge of modern languages, but "Ach! the great difficulty of finding a proper teacher." The fear of being invited to serve as a target to her estimable husband preserved me from her. Besides, I do not like the metaphysical woman.

Egon accompanied me home; his lodgings were in the same hotel as mine. Most of the women and all the men were intoxicated, and my first night in the service of the Emperor of Germany was passed in the torments of sleeplessness. I had a splitting headache when Egon conducted me to the barracks to provide me with a horse. It was the unearthly hour of 4.30, but the barrack-yard was like a beehive. Inside the barracks men clattered noisily in their great knee-boots up the stone staircases, carrying buckets of steaming black coffee up to the dormitories.

That was the men's breakfast. A hasty mouth-

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ful of hard rye bread, washed down with a mug of coffee, and the soldiers trooped out, all spick and span, but none more so than their officers, whom, in the early hours of the morning, I had seen reclining in drunken attitudes on the chairs and couches of their casino, making love to wine-flushed women.

They greeted my haggard appearance with an ironical laugh, but assured me that after a few months in Torgau I, too, should find the secret of eternal freshness. In the casino they were loungers, with all the vices of a degenerate class; in the barrack-yard they were soldiers, bawling out orders and oaths at the Hussars.

CHAPTER IV

THE MACHINE

It was my first glance at the Prussian military machine, and no man has seen this for the first time and remained unmoved. Perhaps the impression was greater because I was unversed in matters military. Now I am no longer so. I have gained my knowledge in Torgau, Cologne, Berlin, as well as the most important fortresses in the east of Germany.

My impression, though dimmed, still remains, and I cannot restrain a half-reluctant admiration of a system that made the dash through France possible. But this perfection has been bought at a great price; the people have paid for it with the loss of their independence. They have bowed their back and offered themselves as footstools in order that their lords might become their task-masters.

When I was in Russia I thought I had seen serfdom in its most extreme form. I came to

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Germany and saw the peasants grovelling in mental and moral slavery of the type which, in England, ended with King John. The greatest sufferer from German tyranny is the German himself.

A husky grunt from the old Bavarian colonel, and out of chaos came an astounding order. In the dim half-light of the dawn the men executed the complex exercises with a mechanical precision. The silence was broken only by the champing of the horses, or by a clash, when some luckless wight brought his long, heavy lance into collision with that of his neighbour, followed instantly by a vindictive "pig-dog" from the colonel. Then the N.C.O. would sidle up to the man and pour a breathless string of oaths at the poor devil who had dared to blunder.

Just as the wintry sun appeared we galloped out along the Elbe, where the exercises continued until I could hardly keep my seat, but the officers and men went on, their eyes fixed stolidly before them, feeling no weariness. At last came the welcome order to return to the barracks at the gallop. Here the men received another pannikin of coffee, with the inevitable black bread.

I breakfasted with Egon, and, from what he

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told me, the life of a Prussian officer is not a bed of roses. They are allowed to play, but they are forced to work, perhaps harder than any officer in any other army. Day in, day out, the forenoon is taken up with interminable exercises. Now and again they have to take, in rotation, the duties of drilling the recruits and reservists. "To knock them into shape" was the way in which he put it. Judging from my subsequent observations, this was an operation demanding much physical exertion and a constant flow of bad language.

After my lessons, which occupied three hours, I went round the stables, where I found some of the Hussars wearily currycombing their horses. Each of them had a little bucket at his side. After a few diplomatic inquiries from the surly Silesian N.C.O. who was superintending, I discovered that these were the men who had wrongly executed some exercise, for which they were now doing "punishment work," which consisted in being obliged to currycomb their horses till they had filled the buckets with the scruff so obtained.

The unfortunate soldiers showed some signs of slacking off because I was there, but instantly the N.C.O. was among them, buffeting this one, spitting on that one, and launching a kick at the third,

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while all the time his vindictive tongue kept pace, lashing the men with "Thou son of a sow," "pig-dog," and similar phrases.

It was no part of my business to interfere. They had already been four hours at the devilishly conceived work.

I spoke to Egon of this and described it as "inhuman cruelty." He was not at all callous, but failed to see my point of view. "Order must be enforced, and when these fellows become N.C.O.'s they will treat their subordinates with a similar cruelty."

That was my first experience of what conscription according to the Prussian system really means. Brutality is tacitly enjoined, not only by the regimental officers, but also by the War Minister—who, in my period at Torgau, was von Heeringen—as is proved by a circular issued with his signature, about which I shall speak later. The sole aim of the system is to turn out a man of perfect discipline, one who has lost every human feeling, and has become but a cog in an immense wheel; and, unfortunately for the world and for Germany, the aim has been reached.

When I heard that the Blue Hussars were recruited, not from the slums of the cities, but from

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the ranks of men whom we would describe as yeoman farmers, my astonishment became greater, for in England no class is more tenacious of its entire independence than the farmers—nor, let it not be forgotten, has played a finer part in some of the crises of our history.

One of the greatest tyrannies, surpassing even that exercised by the officers and N.C.O.'s, under which the German soldier labours is the tyranny of the "Alte Leute." This expression "Old Boys" is the name by which the soldiers who, on completion of their compulsory training have re-engaged themselves, are commonly known in the barracks.

They are men who elect to serve an additional twelve years, after which they are taken into the employment of the State, either as policemen or as administrative clerks in the War Office in Berlin. They are the real masters of the barracks, and their sway over the conscripts and the reservists is recognised by the officers of the regiment, who look to them, in a large measure, as a potent auxiliary in military education.

One or two instances will afford the reader an insight into the manner in which these brutes exercise their functions. In the barracks at Torgau

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two conscripts, while out on leave, met one of their torturers and beat him to death, after which they returned to the barracks and surrendered.

An inquiry was at once instituted, which was suddenly stopped, as the two conscripts were found dead in their cells. The senior doctor of the regiment refused to accept the finding of the Court of Inquiry, and, by dint of exertion, succeeded in forcing the War Office to hold an independent inquiry.

This inquiry was at once his justification and his ruin, for a few months afterwards he was dismissed the army on some trivial charge. It was discovered that the two conscripts were murdered in their cells in order to prevent any disclosures as to the treatment to which they had been subjected. The charges against five ringleaders and murderers were dismissed, as the court martial found that the charges were not proven.

Subsequently Egon disclosed some of the brutalities which the conscripts had suffered. Every night for one week they were stripped stark naked and compelled to run the gauntlet in the corridor, while their persecutors lustily belaboured them with leathern thongs and heavy metal-buckled military belts. In short, they had been so

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maltreated that they preferred to murder one of their persecutors and to end their lives on the scaffold. The "old boys" finished their foul work by strangling the conscripts.

According to the Prussian Regulations, a conscript is obliged to report any case of undue cruelty coming within his notice, but this is never carried out for the simple reason that the usual end of an inquiry is that the conscript is punished for falsely accusing his superior. Some commit suicide, others desert, but the vast majority accept the brutality as a recognised institution and long for the completion of their years of bondage.

Another favourite punishment in cavalry regiments is to tie an offender by the hands to the rafters in the dormitory and to play what is called "pig sticking." A circle is chalked on the breast of the tunic of the "pig." The "old boys" and the other members of the dormitory then arm themselves with pokers, brooms, old lance-handles, or any similar weapon. The end of each man's weapon is liberally chalked as we chalk a billiard cue.

The tormentors line up in Indian file, and at the word of command race up, one by one, and jab at the hanging figure in an endeavour to

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obtain a bull's-eye. All points scored are noted by the dormitory N.C.O., and the loser has to supply the gang with beer.

No attention is paid to the unfortunate victim, who is usually released in a fainting condition and covered with black bruises. Another victim is then selected, and the game goes on till the "old boys" are satisfied. I have known cases when the play raged so vindictively that the chest bones of the "pig" were shattered beyond healing.

In infantry regiments the most common punishment consists in belabouring the conscripts with the blunt-edged bayonet. I am told that this is sometimes modified in this way: two conscripts are forced to fight a duel, in which stabbing is forbidden, and only blows aimed at the head and arms are allowed. Where the duel has not been brutal enough, the "old boys" punish the conscripts by showing them how it should be done.

I have never seen the modification myself, and I believe it is only to be met with in the regiments that are not "chic," that is to say, in regiments where the "bourgeois" officers are determined to reduce the cruelty and brutality on the part of the N.C.O.

It is a peculiar thing that the German officer

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very seldom inflicts bodily punishment on a N.C.O. or an "old boy," but much to my delight Egon made an exception one day in the case of an extremely vindictive non-com. who was the terror of the regiment.

Egon and I were going to the stables, and he ordered Hannemann, the N.C.O. in question, to precede him and have the horses ready saddled. Instead of springing up smartly to the regulation distance from his superior, Hannemann, after a muttered "At your service, Lieutenant," walked nonchalantly towards the stables. I wondered at the extreme quiet of Egon and his care in selecting the heaviest riding crop.

When we reached the stables he walked up to Hannemann and carefully explained that he was going to whip him. It was horrible to see how stolidly Hannemann stood to attention, making no move to dodge the blows (this would have been an additional crime), while Egon lashed him in the face till he had to throw away the riding crop with a curse on his own want of strength. Hannemann saluted and, his face streaming with blood, stumbled back to the barracks.

Scenes like this were so common that after a little while I became so inured to them that they

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failed to move me, but I used to speak frequently of them with the officers. In their opinion the system was perfect, in so far as they were confident of an absolute discipline. The old colonel once told me that it was the enforcement of the most rigid discipline in the barracks that had made possible the lightning victories of Prussia over Denmark, Austria and France.

Afterwards, at the end of von Heeringen's period as War Minister, an attempt was made to put an end to all abuses of authority and to render the officers' corps more democratic; but it was immediately nipped in the bud by the military cabal. This is an organisation which is under the personal control of the Crown Prince, and is known among the German officers as the "Camarilla."

It has complete control of the army, and is so confident of its own strength that it can afford to flout the decisions of the Reichstag or of the Ministry of War. It may not be generally known in England that the trials of the Krupp 42-centimetre cannon were attended only by its members, not by an official of the German War Office, and that the estimates for this new artillery weapon were passed in secret committee appointed by the Camarilla without the knowledge of the Reichstag.

CHAPTER V

THE CAMARILLA

SHORTLY before I made my application to Major von Scholtheim, in whose hands the education of the junior officers lay, to procure my appointment as instructor to the Cadet Academy in Berlin, I went to Belgium for my holidays. As von Kopf was also assiduous on my behalf I had no reason to anticipate disappointment. My reason for desiring a change was twofold. I had seen enough of the Prussian military education to recognise that the revolting cruelties were not the fault of the men and officers, but that the cause lay in the education which was given to those young men who aspired to a lieutenant's "patent," or Commission as we term it in England.

Moreover, I was aware that my situation at Torgau was one which was likely to lead me to the formation of a biased opinion, and I was not concerned merely with discovering the faults of the Prussian military scheme. I had a great

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admiration for the people, and I would have welcomed any sign of a more beneficial system than I had been able to find at Torgau. If there were any good points to be found I could surely meet with them in Berlin—the military capital of Prussia.

In Belgium I found a system which erred, but in a contrary direction. In Louvain, Brussels, Malines, and St. Peter's Barracks at Ghent, everything seemed to tend to the moral uplifting of the recruit, resulting in a weakening of the bonds of discipline. This actually is the case, though it is by no means inevitable. Moreover, the system gave an unworthy advantage to the wealthy in that it allowed payment for a substitute. Happily, these conditions were afterwards remedied by the Military Act.

Trying to be judicial (to the best of my ability, for it requires an effort in view of such appalling crimes), I cannot hesitate to lay the blame for the German atrocities in Belgium and Poland on the shoulders of those who were responsible for the education of the cadets. Nor were they solely to blame, for the ultimate criminals are the "blood and iron" Camarilla in Berlin, who debased and stultified their subordinates.

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The first idea inculcated in the military academies is that the Prussian officer is "God's masterpiece," and possessed, therefore, of all the virtues, and that the bulk of the German people has been placed upon the earth for his personal convenience. The result is the creation of a spirit of intolerable braggadocio. Not only that, the system goes farther, and teaches that a German officer is released from all moral laws.

In consequence, the moral atmosphere of an academy is indescribable.

Another cause for the demoralisation of the Prussian officer is his immunity from civil justice, except in extremely rare cases. His only dread is the secret condemnation of the Crown Prince's Camarilla, and where he shows a due contempt of his subordinates and the civilian population, he has nothing to fear, no matter what his faults may be.

I knew one general, now fighting against the Russians, President of the Society for Protection against Socialism, and incidentally, secretary to the Camarilla, who drives a remunerative traffic in titles and decorations of the Prussian Court. According to his tariff, the price of the title of

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"Supplier to the Household of his Majesty" cost £1,000, and other titles pro rata.

In Berlin over one hundred officers of the crack Prussian regiments were implicated in a club, the girl frequenters of which were under fifteen years—every one of them the daughter of a respectable tradesman. Needless to say, inquiry into this scandal was very quietly killed.

My friend Rosa Luxemburg, one of the most honourable women in Germany and leader of the most advanced social organisations, is now serving a year's imprisonment in Prussia for having revealed the darker side of life in barracks, and she had only a very fragmentary knowledge of the circumstances.

Nevertheless, she was able to bring forward over four hundred time-expired soldiers, who testified to the innumerable cruelties which they themselves suffered, or which they saw inflicted on their comrades. The Prussian War Minister stopped the case and secured the condemnation of Dr. Luxemburg on the separate charge of causing disaffection in the Imperial armies.

On one day of each year every Prussian, from the stripling of eighteen to the old man in the last classes of the Landsturm, is exempt from civil law,

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and is responsible only to the military tribunals, which are under the control of the notorious French renegade and personal friend of the Crown Prince —Pellet Narbonne.

This day is termed the "Controlle," and is equivalent to the test mobilisation of the entire armed forces of the German Empire. All the reservists in a district receive orders to report themselves to their district commander to answer the roll-call. Absentees, from no matter what cause, are punished as deserters. During this day the men hold themselves at the disposition of the district commander, and such breaches of discipline as drunkenness, rowdyism, or refusal of obedience are tried before the tribunals. As the Controlle may be ordered at any time, every German, before leaving home, informs his headquarters of the address where a wire will find him in the event of his absence. Even commercial travellers must not start on their business rounds without complying with this regulation, which they dare not treat as a formality.

On the day of the Controlle at Erfurt, nine reservists entered a café in which was seated a gendarme who, as a N.C.O. and "old boy," was their superior officer. During the drinking

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bout the gendarme was insulted. Thereupon the nine reservists were sentenced to be confined to a fortress for the period of 135 years, averaging fifteen years for each man. Under civil law they would have been sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment.

CHAPTER VI

A REIGN OF TERROR

WHAT I saw during a brief sojourn in Posen justified Rosa Luxemburg's statements to the full.

Latterly, Polish conscripts have been consigned to South German garrisons or to the fortresses of Alsace, but at the time of which I write the revolutionary spirit of the Poles was not so pronounced. All the members of the officers' corps were scions of the Brandenburg feudal aristocracy, to whom the mere mention of Poland was anathema.

Von Muhlendorff was the commandant, a wizened little Prussian autocrat, who had been sent by the Camarilla to subjugate Posen, and I must say that he carried out his orders to the letter.

He was the worst type of the Prussian officer, a man absolutely devoid of all military spirit, a mere bureaucrat, who, by sheer devilry in devising regulations for the annihilation of the

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Polish spirit, had made himself beloved by the Camarilla.

He was most unpopular with his officers, and whispers were current in the casino that he was a Polish renegade, whose real name was Koshu-witz. When I was in the Berlin casino in Pariser Platz on the 3rd of August, I heard a rumour that he was to be appointed provisional Governor of Belgian Wallony.

He initiated a reign of terror in Posen from which no one was safe, and many an officer has been recalled on the mere suspicion of an objection to his methods in dealing with the Poles. He introduced a vast system of espionage, bribed soldiers to betray their comrades, and employed "agents-provocateurs" to incite the Poles to insubordination, which he promptly and ruthlessly suppressed.

His greatest injustice was his order forbidding the use of the Polish language in word or letter. The chaplains were not allowed to hear confession save in German. Many of the conscripts were unable to speak a single word of German, and even where the sons could do so the parents at home understood only Polish.

It was an everyday occurrence to have a

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"punishment parade," when von Muhlendorff would wreak his vengeance on some luckless Pole. Some were summarily sentenced to confinement in the fortress, others were relegated to the status of "second-class" soldier.

This latter punishment is something like the old degradation in the English Army of "drumming out," except that in Germany the soldier is "drummed out" of the first class into the second class, whereby all his leave is stopped during the remainder of his period of service, sometimes eighteen months or two years. He is not allowed to leave the precincts of the barracks. His spare time is filled with punishment work, and all chance of promotion is lost to him.

But these punishments left von Muhlendorff's brutal soul cold. He derived enjoyment only when he could see his victims suffer, and his favourite punishment was therefore flogging, at which he made the entire regiment assist, including the officers and the chaplains.

All his non-commissioned officers were the "Alte Leute," already referred to, hard-bitten Prussians of the lowest type, of whom it will also be necessary to say something more presently.

Von Muhlendorff selected the most recalcitrant

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Poles as his orderlies—of whom he had always three—and exercised every power in his endeavours to Prussianise them, ranging from bribery and specious promises of advancement to the most fiendish cruelties.

These poor devils were objects of pity to the other officers, and were free game to the "Alte Leute," but they never remained long with the commandant. Some went to the military prison for insubordination, others succeeded in escaping over the border to Russia, but most committed suicide.

I may say that while in Posen I had the pleasure, assisted by one of the lieutenants, of sending three of them to Sweden via Rostock by means of false papers. But no matter what their fate might be, others, equally unfortunate, succeeded them.

In speaking of military prisons, it would be incorrect to imagine a military prison as we know it here. In Germany there is no uniformity on this head; those in Saxony, Bavaria and Prussia proper are usually like ordinary criminal prisons, except that the cells are miserably small—mere rabbit hutches, four paces wide by seven feet long.

In Prussian Poland, and more especially in the

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military districts of Posen and Bromberg, the cells are just ill-ventilated holes. During the day the bed, which is fixed on a hinged socket, is raised against the wall and padlocked. This is necessary as, when the board is let down at night, the entire space of the cell is taken up.

The prisoner is forbidden to lie on the floor during the day to rest himself. His only nourishment is water and a chunk of black bread. He is not allowed to leave the cell for any reason whatever. No means of cleansing are allowed, and by reason of the very crude sanitary arrangements, and the fact that the cells are infested with vermin of every species, the stench becomes horrible in a few days.

I have mentioned von Muhlendorff's regulation forbidding the Polish language. This embargo applied in its entirety. I have seen visitors to the barracks mutely holding the hands of the soldier. They could not speak German and he dared not speak Polish.

One most harrowing scene I shall never forget. A very decent young Pole, Joseph Bronkowski, had been so cruelly maltreated, not only by the "Alte Leute," but by von Muhlendorff personally, that in desperation he threw himself on the point

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of his bayonet, preferring death to the continuance of his suffering.

He was found, a few hours afterwards, wallowing in a pool of blood. As he was very evidently on the point of death he was carried into the lazaretto and his mother—a small shopkeeper in the town—was summoned to his bedside.

Oblivious of the presence of the redoubtable commandant, she burst into a torrent of Polish love-words, such as a mother uses to her sick child. Giving her a black look von Muhlendorff roughly seized the poor old woman, and, disregarding the entreaties of the chaplain and the doctor, brutally ejected her. Half an hour later Joseph Bronkowski passed away. I found the mother, in a paroxysm of weeping, on the stairs.

It was a long time before the Reign of Terror was relaxed at Posen. Every day it seemed to grow more intense, and from the military it spread to the civil population over the whole area of Prussian Poland. In a determined effort to smash the national agitation, the War Minister ordered the German Land Bank to call in all mortgages on Polish real estate! The "All Deutscher Bund" (the prototype of the Sinn Fein movement initiated in Ireland by Kuno Meyer) was

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founded, Polish landed property was confiscated under the "Ausnahmegesetz" (in the majority of cases without compensation), and the farms were divided among the Pan-German or full-blood Prussians. And in the barracks the work of tyranny went merrily on. Those who bent not were ground under the wheels of German autocracy.

Since then I have seen much oppression in the various garrisons at which I subsequently taught, but I have never met anything surpassing in bestial cruelty the treatment that was meted out to the unfortunate Poles. The French renegade, Pellet Narbonne—who presided over the mockery of a court martial at the time of the Zabern affair, who, also, passed sentence of death on Nurse Cavell—was called to assist in what was officially termed "the work of pacification."

Pellet Narbonne is the tool of the red von Haeseler, by whom he had been made military judge with unlimited powers. In Poland he proved himself the apt pupil of an unworthy master. I remember, in one day, hearing sentence of forty-five years' imprisonment passed on three Polish soldiers who had been accused of failing to salute their Prussian sergeant. This

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"Feldwebel" (colour-sergeant) was one of the old gang, and his cruelty was the cause of his death.

One of his pretty schemes was to order a recruit, who was suspect, to awaken him in the morning at five o'clock. According to instructions, the soldier was to come dressed only in his night attire. Schultze the Feldwebel allowed himself to be awakened, and then, seizing the heavy artillery whip which he always carried, proceeded to belabour the unfortunate Pole.

Every day brought a new victim, till, to his own misfortune, Schultze selected a dark-haired young Pole who, a few months before, had been a student of medicine at the University of Breslau. Unlike the other victims, he made no cry when Schultze indulged in his customary sport; but at evening roll-call he was missing. He appeared the following morning and gave himself up to the guard, remarking nonchalantly that he had killed the Feldwebel, whom he had enticed to a lonely spot outside the fortifications.

He was tried before Pellet Narbonne. Three hours later he was beheaded, for the judge desired to make his death as disgraceful as possible, and refused him a military execution at the hands of a firing squad.

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But though the Feldwebel was gone there were many emulators. In one week we had in the barracks at Posen seventeen deaths of Poles "from unaccountable reasons." This verdict covers much in Germany. It hides either a brutal murder of a conscript on the part of the officers or of the non-commissioned officers, or it conceals the suicide of a desperate soldier who, in an effort to escape further unbearable persecution, sees no way out but to take his own life.

One case, which occurred in the Garde Artillerie in Berlin, I remember particularly well, for the victim, Fränz Kaufmann, was the son of a doctor with whom I was on terms of intimacy. Kaufmann, for some reason or other, had made himself very obnoxious to the "Alte Leute" and every effort had been made to break his spirit. Over and over again he had served as "pig" in the noble Prussian game of pig-sticking.

He had been taken out and suspended in the barrack-yard over a fire of green wood till he was almost suffocated. He had been tossed to the horses; he had been tied to the board of an ammunition wagon and dragged through the yard, where his skin broke against the cobbles; he had been stripped times out of number and flogged by

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the other soldiers, under the direction of his tormentors. But he had borne all unflinchingly.

It was only when he was subjected to still more revolting cruelty that he lost control of himself. Kaufmann suddenly pulled off his hob-nailed knee-boot and dashed it into the face of one of his tormentors.

In the morning he was found dead, hanging in one of the stables. A long leading rein had been bound round his neck, and he was then suspended from a rafter which was over the passageway. He was hanging in such a position as to preclude any possibility of suicide. There was not one in the barracks who was not aware that an abominable murder had been committed. There were hundreds who could have pointed out the criminals. The officers knew them, but that authority might not be undermined by the spectacle of a superior being punished for cruelty to an inferior, an open verdict was returned. He is one of the thousands who have died "from unaccountable reasons."

I was glad when I was ordered to report to the War Office. I learned afterwards that I had been suspected of being implicated in the escape of many soldiers to Russia.

CHAPTER VII

THE BARRACK KINGS

THE tyranny of the "Alte Leute" or "Old Boys," to whom I have referred once or twice, surpasses even that of the higher commissioned officers.

These "Alte Leute" are the uncrowned kings of the barracks. Automatically they become non-commissioned officers, and their mean ambitions are satisfied for the moment. Further progress depends on how their educative faculty is exercised, as was evidenced by what I saw in the barracks of the Alexander Guards in Berlin, to which I had been appointed after I had left Torgau.

Ten days after I had taken up my duties with this regiment I heard astonished mutterings in the officers' casino concerning a court martial which was shortly to take place upon a private who had murdered a non-commissioned officer by beating him to death in the stables. In due course the soldier was taken out by the firing squad to the Templehoferfeld and executed, and it was many

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days before I succeeded in learning the facts that led to the murder.

Like all the other soldiers of the Alexander Guards, Johannes Bobbe was the son of parents who belonged to a class which may be described as corresponding to that of the English yeoman.

In common with the conscripts who are allotted to this "élite" regiment, his parents were obliged to present him with a half-blood charger, towards the upkeep of which they contracted to pay their son a monthly allowance of one hundred marks, or roughly five pounds. This is the unwritten rule of the regiment, and is looked on with much favour by the chief at the War Office, and especially by the Remount Department, for, after completion of their years of service the soldiers are forbidden to take away the horses, which then pass into the possession of the German army.

That his son might not be outshone, Johannes's father had imported a horse which had just won a prize at the Dublin Horse Show, and, unfortunately, it attracted the notice and aroused the cupidity of the N.C.O., who, in spite of Johannes's protest, used it on every possible occasion.

Time came when the N.C.O. decided to acquire full ownership not by way of purchase,

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but as a voluntary gift. On this point Johannes stood steadfast, and the reign of persecution began. The entire body of the "Alte Leute" was aroused; that a private should refuse to "present" anything which an "old boy" desired was unheard of.

Summary punishment was decided on. Johannes, as a preliminary to breaking his independent spirit, was refused all leave. While the other soldiers were sporting themselves, Johannes was obliged to currycomb the horses till he could fill a number of buckets with the scruff obtained. This seems simple punishment. In reality it is an elaborate torture, carried out, as it is, under the gimlet eye of a N.C.O., who liberally distributes kicks and curses at the slightest sign of slacking.

The "old boys" tired before Johannes did, and the second stage was reached. Every night for one week he was stripped stark naked in the dormitory and—as described in an earlier chapter—forced to run the gauntlet of two rows of the "Alte Leute," duly armed with leather belts and military thongs, while blows were showered upon him, the N.C.O.s watching that the other soldiers put the last ounce of strength into the work which they were compelled to do. Woe betide him who showed

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any signs of mercy, for he was then given a taste of the medicine! Johannes still refused to give up his horse. All the thousand and one forms of barrack torture were tried on him, but he still stood firm. Finally his horse was calmly led into the stables of the N.C.O., and this marked the last stage in the tragedy, for one morning Johannes met the N.C.O. in the common stables, and killed him with a blow of a spade. Thus he slew his chief persecutor, and found his own grave in the Templehoferfeld.

I remember the numberless Germans whose bodies still show the myriad marks of the clasp of the "Iron Maiden." This devilish contrivance is officially sanctioned for use in the military prisons, and is also employed in the Brandenburg and North German feudal regiments. The "Iron Maiden" is an iron box, roughly resembling in shape a coffin, and derives its name from the allegorical figure of Germania which is stamped on the lid. It is not hermetically sealed, for above the occupant's face is a grille, through which he can be observed. Inside, the floor, walls and lid are fitted with small, but exceedingly sharp, steel prongs. The soldier condemned to the embraces of the "Iron Maiden" is stripped, and his arms

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and feet are lashed in such a manner as to preclude movement. He is then laid on the bed of steel prongs, and as the coffin lid is closed they are forced into his body.

When the nails have penetrated his flesh, the lid is removed and after a few moments replaced, so that the wounds are torn open. During the punishment the medical officer is in attendance, and when the "patient" has fainted through loss of blood he is removed to the hospital. With that curious moral twist that one remarks so frequently in Germany, the steel prongs are carefully sterilised before and after each operation, so that blood poisoning may not ensue. Belgium has suffered, Serbia has suffered, and Montenegro has felt the lash of Prussian militarism, but more martyrs, murdered or suicide, fill German graves than these three countries could furnish.

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRUSSIAN LIEUTENANT

WELLINGTON, in a moment of elation, is supposed to have said, speaking of the British troops, "With such an army I could do anything and go anywhere," but in all probability these words emanated from the brain of some astute journalist, as is the way with most of the pithy sayings attributed to great men.

But most of us will remember the boastful utterance of the Kaiser on the occasion of the review of the Gross Lichterfelde Cadet Academy, when he voiced the feelings of Germany by saying: "The Prussian lieutenant cannot be imitated by any other army."

As one of the instructors to the cadets I had received the doubtful honour of an invitation to attend the function, and although I had experience of the superhumanity in all the virtues of the Prussian lieutenant, the whole-hearted belief with which the Kaiser uttered these words impressed me very considerably.

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This idea does not seem to be confined to Germany, as I have had under my charge, at different times, cadets nominated by other European Governments, and it is worthy of remark that on the completion of their course of studies in the Prussian Army these cadets have been appointed by their respective Governments to positions of great importance.

At the time of the Zabern affair, the Kaiser—by refusing to accede to the request to punish Lieutenant Förster and the other junior officers responsible for the insults to the French nation—again took up a strong position as to the inviolability of the Prussian lieutenant.

The famous telegrams of the Crown Prince to Förster and von Reuter inciting them to further mischief were but the expression of the same belief, that the Prussian lieutenant can do no wrong.

Officially, Förster was banished to an East Prussian garrison; in point of fact, this banishment was nullified by an order, signed by the Kaiser, commanding him to a course of instruction at the Berlin War Academy. He was repeatedly received at the Palace, where he was the cynosure of the eyes of the young and impressionable Court ladies.

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Again, on the outbreak of hostilities, Major Moraht, in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, made use of the following blasphemous sentence : "We are superior to the world in the martial virtues, and God has given us His masterpiece—the Prussian lieutenant."

In no other country is the spirit of military adulation carried to such excess as in Germany. It is more than adulation; it is downright adoration. Before the war, the people placed their reliance on the dash of the lieutenants rather than on the science and sagacity of the senior officers. And one must admit that, whatever their faults and defects, the Prussian officers have always shown themselves to the people as ' beau-ideal of the soldier, hiding a dare-devil courage under a cloak of insouciance.

To the German he is the embodiment of the god of war; he is the guardian of liberty, ready and willing to lay down his life for the Fatherland, and much is forgiven him. His duellings, his libertinage, his every excess is condoned, and his virtues are writ large. His testimony, unsupported by any oath, is adjudged sufficient in the German law courts, and I have known many cases where mothers have accepted the ruin of their

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daughters by young officers as something which added lustre to the family. These mothers were the wives of respectable tradesmen.

The German officer's code of morality begins and ends in these sentiments: "Always to keep my allegiance to the War Lord, and never to blench before an enemy." I have heard a mother say to her only son—a youth of eighteen, who had just received his officer's patent—"Good-bye," and then as the train was steaming out, she cried, "Die as a brave man should." That was on August 4. He was killed in an attack on the 20th of the same month. Such is the spirit animating Germany.

But in this war the Prussian lieutenant has himself destroyed his own prestige. Not even in the event of a victory for Germany will the people adore him, for their idol has shown his feet of clay. He was the chevalier who was to war on men; he is the swashbuckler who has laid hands on women and children. When the stories of his barbarism become known after the war, the day of dashing lieutenants will have set, for the German people are a people of sentiment, who sigh for home and children. The German officer has dishonoured the German Army.

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I must confess that I am not surprised at this, for I have seen how decent young boys were rendered vicious, how they came to the school with a high valuation of honour and the reverence of good, and how they left as prematurely aged roués. The fault lay not in them. Differently trained and away from that hero-worship which is the greatest curse in a military country, they would have made honourable as well as brave men.

The training in brutality and the love for the infliction of pain begin with the first days of the cadet's school life. It is impossible to afford any just idea of the barbarity of the "hazing" to which every new cadet is subjected, and it is not unusual for a cadet to take his own life rather than continue to suffer the persecutions imposed on him. Duelling—in imitation of the "Mensur" of the colour-students, or students who are members of the duelling clubs—takes place, although this practice is officially forbidden.

During one term no fewer than seven cadets committed suicide. The parents received a notification of the death of their son, but in no case has an inquiry been requested. It is saddening to notice how quickly these young fellows deteriorate; to see them, at first fresh from motherly influence,

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gradually become bullies and libertines and cavaliers to notorious women.

They are allowed to go to Berlin frequently, and, as officers of the Prussian Army, are treated with the greatest deference. They become well known in the wine-rooms in the district of Friedrichstrasse. A boy of sixteen or seventeen who is thus freed from moral restraint must necessarily become a libertine, and a Prussian lieutenant who is not a libertine is a subject of mockery.

The famous Alsatian caricaturist "Hansi" once, in a café in Mülhausen, had to take a chair which had previously been sat upon by a lieutenant. Taking a lump of sugar from the table, he poured methylated spirits over it, and then proceeded to "disinfect" the chair by rolling the burning piece of sugar across the seat.

There was a howl of indignation among the Germans at this insult to their officers. Hansi fled to France and, while the court was deliberating on his case, war was declared. I believe Hansi is now fighting as a French trooper, although technically he is a German subject.

In Moabit—where the barracks of the Guards are situated—I have repeatedly seen evidences of this brutality of the Prussian lieutenant. On one

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occasion last autumn a conscript forgot to give a cadet the proper salute. He was immediately ordered to the guard-room, where the poor wretch received fourteen days' "strong arrest." This means solitary confinement on an insufficient diet, and, in addition, he is chained in a standing posture to the wall for several hours each day.

The heavy chains are so arranged that the entire weight of the body is thrown on the legs, and it is impossible for the prisoner to procure any rest for himself. I have been assured that, after the first hour, the pain becomes excruciating, and relief is only obtained when the prisoner has become unconscious.

Again, one of the privates attached to the Cadet School had been guilty of some impertinence or other to one of the boys. They determined to punish him in their own way, although he would have been regularly reported to the commandant. They took the unfortunate man to the stables and tied him across the manger. They then proceeded to belabour him on the shins with heavy stable implements. Despite his appeals, they continued to beat him unmercifully till their poor victim fainted. The bones of both legs had been shattered beyond repair and amputation was necessary.

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This affair was so crass that an inquiry was instituted, the result of which was that the ring-leaders were reprimanded. Two of them are now serving in the Zieten Hussars—the regiment of the Crown Prince—so that their devilish brutality does not seem to have injured their career.

It is men such as these, it is the Prussian lieutenant, deified by his own people, who have violated Belgium and swept the country with rapine and lust and plundering. The criminal against civilisation and humanity is not the German soldier, who had to obey orders, but the Prussian lieutenant who issued them. "The Prussian lieutenant," said the Kaiser, and we think it worth while to repeat it, "cannot be imitated by any other army." We leave him the sorry honour.

CHAPTER IX

THE SCOURGE OF SERBIA

IN these pages I intend to depict, as I know them, those who have made their names a byword in international history, and whose infamy has flashed red across the skies that look down on the scenes of devastation and ruin, on the blood-soaked earth, on the despair of peoples. It is fit and meet that pride of place should be given to that monster in human shape whose actions were the mainspring of the deed of the young Serb whose insanity led to the war.

This man is Potiorek. To you the name may mean nothing, but to those who have fought with him, or lived under his iron rule, it conjures up a vision of intolerable tyranny and brutal blood-lust. "Potiorek the Red" is the name by which he is known among the Slavs of the annexed province of Herzegovina, and well has he deserved his sobriquet. In those far-off days when, impatient of the bonds of

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international agreement, the Emperor of Austria, at the bidding of his Hohenzollern master, annexed the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, he cast his eyes on his servants to find one who could drill an entire people. - Francis Joseph selected Potiorek, who, even in peace-time, was of hideous renown.

When he first came to Herzegovina he found an outraged people, intensely national, but still, with that fatalism of the southern Slav, peaceful beyond his expectations.

In the first months of his virtual reign he essayed all the known tricks to drive a proud nation into insubordination. He initiated the police régime, and what that means can be but briefly sketched here, for the details are horrible. His victims lived under the shadow of death. An insult to a tool of Potiorek was punished with instant death. What was desired was taken, even to wives and daughters. Where prosperity had reigned, Potiorek brought poverty. Where were smiles and joy, Potiorek brought tears and sadness.

I remembered this when, in the summer of 1912, for purposes of my own, I made an extended tour both of Herzegovina and Bosnia. I had

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passed the night in a poverty-stricken hovel in Banjaluka, and at the break of day was proceeding on foot to a neighbouring village. I had walked only a few kilometres when I met an entire family wandering along the road, and, as is the custom of the simple country, I rested with them.

Before the days of the annexation the husband had been a corn merchant in a good way of business; now he was a homeless wanderer on the highway. What he told me of the cruelty of Potiorek I dare not relate in anything like entirety; one instance must suffice.

Previously there had been more than enough of corn and flour; after the Austrians came the country was so bled for the benefit of the Monarchy that the bread of the people consisted of a cereal ground in the husk, and then mixed with dirt and water to a dough-like consistency. This was general throughout the provinces, for I myself have eaten it in places as far apart as from the outskirts of Semlin on the Danube to the borders of Croatian Slavonia, and from Zara on the shores of the Adriatic across to the borders of Hungary.

Three months after his appointment, the

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Arbeiter (a Viennese Socialist paper) was suppressed, and the editor was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for having endeavoured to publish a document that might have caused disaffection to the Throne. The document in question was a lengthy letter written by Potiorek to a Jewish journalist in Vienna, from whom it had been stolen. By devious ways the letter had found a path to the *Arbeiter* office, where before the seizure I had the opportunity of reading it. It was addressed to "My dear Rudi," and, after speaking of various matters of mutual interest, Potiorek dealt with the question of Herzegovina.

He began: "I have now been here three months, and, if I dared to follow my own inclination, I should place my resignation in the hands of my superiors. But I am constantly told that things will improve. I could wish myself back in Vienna were it not that this position is good for my old disease of consumption of the purse. I have tried everything here. I have installed our friend as Police Chief, and have given him a free hand, but even he cannot awaken the people. One could die with ennui. But I have a plan."

He then proceeded to relate to "Dear Rudi "

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the details of his fiendish plan. How he succeeded is now well known. He drove a patient people to impatience. He made a law-abiding peasantry the members of secret societies. For his cruelty had become so uncontrolled, and his oppression so severe, that, in desperation, the people banded themselves into the "Narodna." But Potiorek was never satisfied unless blood was being spilt, and the "Narodna" grew to such dimensions that even he was affrighted.

In an effort to crush the demon he had raised he redoubled his brutalities, but the people had broken their chains. They rendered insult for insult, and took three lives for every one lost. And so the day moved on to Sarajevo where the Serb boy had taken the oath not to kill the Heir, but to rid the earth of Potiorek. In an access of fanaticism he lost his control over his nerves, and dealt his blow mistakenly. How Bosnia and Herzegovina have suffered since few know. The German hordes are but amateurs compared to Potiorek-trained terrorisers, and after the war the world will hear of a people that has been exterminated root and branch.

It was but natural that Potiorek should have supreme command of the first expedition against

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Serbia. Who knew the country so well as he? And had he not his own body of spies? Like a man of death he swept across the Danube, and began his massacres even at the Iron Gates.

You who know of the sack of Louvain and weep at the sorrows of Armenia, do you know that in an Army Order issued to his troops Potiorek sentenced every tenth person in the occupied territories to death? Where he marched the ground was littered with corpses, and not a stone was left on another. Once, owing to the rocky soil, he was unable to take up an entrenched position to defend himself against a threatened attack by the Montenegrins, but he did not retreat. He ordered all the civilians in his rear to be roped together and brought to the front. Here they were compelled to lie on the ground, whilst the Austrian soldiers fought from behind these human sandbags.

I could tell stories of the fiendish cruelty of Potiorek that would make you mad; but it will be sufficient to say that even the German war correspondents were so sickened with his inhumanity that they refused to report his campaign. All the correspondents who subsequently served on the southern front were officers.

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Such, briefly, is the character of Potiorek, whose red and ruthless hand called up the spectre of war. He is as hated in Vienna as he is in Herzegovina, but everywhere he is feared. The sad Serbs call him the "ghoul."

Years before the war broke out he was known in Austria, but his infamy has never been so red as to-day; he has rendered Serbia like unto a cemetery.

CHAPTER X

THE VILLAIN OF THE PIECE

IF you are a student of history you will doubtless know of the superstition among the veterans of Napoleon that the lightning victories which graced the standards of the Corsican Usurper were due, not to his military genius, but to the advice and help given him by "L'Homme Rouge." "The Red Man" was the fearsome idol of the French Republican soldiers. And so it is with the Germans, with this difference, that the "Red Man" of Germany is no mere superstition, but a terrible fact.

Recently I read in Rabelais the following sentence: "Here are the Saxons, the Hanseatics, the Austrians and the Germans, under the heel of a crippled dwarf." My memory went back to those days when I heard the people clamouring for war, and to the "Red Man" of Germany, Field-Marshal Count von Haeseler.

Now I hear that he has been recalled. His

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name means nothing to most of us. The war "experts," who fill columns with ideas culled from military text-books, know him not. And yet he is a man who deserves to be known, for he is the murderer of Edith Cavell. He is the "higher personage" referred to by Lord Robert Cecil in his terrible indictment of the system that rendered possible the martyrdom of Brussels.

In those days when I acted as teacher to the German Officers' Corps I first met him, and his features have so impressed themselves upon my memory that I can still picture him. He is a man, almost dwarfish, whose skull is shaven down to his neck, where the remnant of grey hair overhangs his bright crimson collar. Years ago, when Germany was drunk with exultation at the victory of '71, the capital resounded to the echo of his many scandals. But now the hot blood has left his veins and his body has become but a shell, in which there lives the soul of a brute. His face is yellow and dead but for the glitter of two luminous eyes.

Such is von Haeseler, the dreaded idol of Germany, director of the German battle line, destroyer of Belgium, murderer of defenceless women and children. In the Press notices an-

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nouncing his downfall, it is said that he was a devoted friend of the House of Hohenzollern. Von Haeseler was nobody's friend but his own. He was an object of abhorrence to the Kaiser, and the Crown Prince trembled with fear when he felt von Haeseler's chilly glare. But he was too powerful to be touched either by the Kaiser or his son, for the army was in the grasp of von Haeseler. He was the War Lord, and toasted as such at the officers' casinos. He was the strong hand of Germania. The empty honours and the shame of being his figurehead were the Kaiser's.

About five years ago I was attached to the Torgauer Hussars, under the command of Major von Scholtheim. He was an officer with very pronounced Liberalist ideas. One morning he was found dead in his bedroom. I was ignorant of much in the Prussian military system, but I imagined that he had taken his life by reason of the discovery of some hidden degeneracy, as is so often the case in Prussian suicides. But I was soon enlightened.

It appeared that von Haeseler had issued stringent instructions concerning the methods to be adopted in training the conscripts. To von

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Scholtheim these instructions were nothing but a reversion to unheard-of brutality, and he ignored them; in revenge for which von Haeseler caused him to be dismissed the service with ignominy. I ceased to wonder at the Major's suicide.

Stories were told that von Haeseler was more powerful than the War Minister. Many officers were wrecked, and there was the usual carnival of suicides. Young striplings—tools of von Haeseler—jumped the ladder of promotion, and so in a few years the German Army belonged to him. He destroyed War Ministers when it suited his purpose, but always he remained discreetly hidden in the background. When, out of curiosity, I searched the Army List, the only entry I discovered was a record of one "von Haeseler, Director of Promotions," an office which had always been regarded as virtually a sinecure.

On von Haeseler's instructions a new system of disciplining recruits was inaugurated. What before his time was mere isolated brutality became the rule. Conscripts who could bend, bent. Those less flexible he broke by a series of organised cruelties, the wantonness of which it is hardly possible to imagine. His subordinates pushed the new system with such vigour that "barrack

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suicide" (as it is called in Germany) trebled itself in as many years. I, who have seen von Haeseler's "education" in operation, still shudder at some memories of a system that inculcated the spirit of discipline in so hideous a fashion.

Woe unto the soldier who entered the caserne without first divesting himself of every subversive idea as to the "rights of man," for von Haeseler's tools soon taught him other ideas, not unaccompanied with horrors, the most common of which was the sport called "pig-sticking" I have already described.

Need there be any wonder, then, that these pupils of von Haeseler's education have made the world revolt at the stench of their crimes in Belgium and in France?

Von Haeseler was known in Germany as "The man who does not break his word." When, in August of 1914, he was leaving Berlin to take command in the rush through Belgium, a farewell dinner was given him at the Service Club in Dorotheenstrasse. To the assembled officers he announced that he had fixed his entry into Paris for September 15. On the fateful day Berlin should keep high holiday. The printing presses were held in readiness to run off the "extras"

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announcing the news of the fulfilment of von Haeseler's boast. The Court musician had composed a new "March into Paris" in honour of the occasion, and the military bands were to give the first performance in the Schlossplatz before the Kaiser's windows.

Came midnight. No news, but still the stolid burghers waited. The truth then filtered through that von Haeseler dallied at the Marne.

And now he who has "broken" hundreds is himself broken; he who sat miles behind the front and threw away hundreds of thousands of young lives is himself thrown away. His break-up is but the forerunner of the ruin of the system that he created, a system of military domination and government by the Camarilla.

CHAPTER XI

GERMANY'S EVIL GENIUS

PRUSSIAN domination is not an idea of yesterday. It was born in the shock of a decisive defeat, and baptised with the blood of Prussia's victims. It fed on the wild poetry of Uhland. It was nourished on the writings of Heinrich von Kleist. It grew big with the victories of Bismarck. Before the reign of William II., the present Kaiser, it was an "idea," as yet unformulated, but none the less powerful.

Then, unfortunately for Germany, and equally so for the wide world, the "idea"—in its initial stages glorious and worthy of admiration—fell, plastic, into the hands of a gang of soldiers; patriots, it is true, but with that patriotism which seeks only the end and is unscrupulous as to the means. And the chief among those who moulded it was General von Moltke, a man to whom blood and iron is as the breath of life, who, in 1911, three years before the outbreak of the war,

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openly boasted that "he saw the vista of a glorious future for Prussia born in a welter of slaughter, saw the graceful form of beloved Germania emerging from a red sea of blood to take her appointed place in the vanguard of civilisation."

This is the man in whose hands the destinies of the world might, it was fondly hoped, one day rest; in his and in those of members of the Camarilla, the bloodthirsty von Haeseler, the malevolent Pellet Narbonne, von Einem, von Kessel and the Crown Prince. It is a fact worthy of note that, for reasons which I do not know, only the generals of the Camarilla have been sent to the Western front, while the war against Russia has been left exclusively to the direction of von Hindenburg and von Mackensen. Both the latter were and are bitter opponents of the Camarilla, which explains, perhaps, why the Kaiser, haunted by the thought that his army had been captured by the Camarilla, and that his place as War Lord had been usurped by the Crown Prince, lavishes his affections and rewards on Hindenburg and Mackensen.

It was in 1910 that I first met von Falkenhayn. He was then of no importance. Later the War Minister, von Heeringen, initiated his revolt against the Camarilla, produced his plans for the

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democratisation of the Prussian command, and, horror of horrors ! went to the extreme of declaring that he saw no reason why a Jew should not make a good officer.

Those who have lived in Germany will perhaps recognise the enormity of proposing such an innovation to the Prussian Junker. Von Heeringen had signed his own death-warrant. The hoary old sinner von Haeseler, sitting in his shabby office, nominally subordinate to the War Minister, but in reality his superior through the dread power of the Camarilla, pulled the string that ruined him who might conceivably have averted the present catastrophe. The Ministry of War was vacant, and von Haeseler selected von Falkenhayn, "the audacious," as the Crown Prince calls him, always ready to do the bidding of his master, be the work never so dirty. Falkenhayn was German War Minister.

He is a Prussian of the extremest type, a Junker of the worst class, one to whom the exalted worth of the Prussian nobility was an infallible creed. To this add the fact that there is in Germany no more bitter opponent of Democracy, and you obtain a clear idea of his mentality.

Hard as von Haeseler is, he is but putty com-

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pared to the adamant Falkenhayn. He celebrated his accession to office by an unprovoked attack on the Socialists and the German democracy. When his appointment was but two days old he proclaimed that he would make the barrack-yard the burial-place of Socialism, universal brotherhood and such like unpatriotic futilities. And he kept his word. He resorted to the most brutal force. Democratic officers were banished, lax disciplinarians were ruined, kindness to a conscript was almost crime enough for a court martial. He gave unlimited powers to the "old boys," and told his officers that in all circumstances they must have their influence strengthened. He tacitly gave approval to every form of barrack cruelty; nay, more, he openly encouraged it. He deemed the means of conscript education inadequate. He sought for inspiration in the brutal reign of Frederick the Great, when the Prussian soldier was wholly at the mercy of his superiors, and he found the triangle, a most bestial form of cruelty, which explains in some measure the reason why the proportion of German recruits in the French Foreign Legion mounted so steadily. One who had lived under the barbarity of von Falkenhayn had no need to blench before the iron discipline of the Legion.

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Things went to such a point, and desertions became so frequent, that a witty French journalist wrote: "If only von Falkenhayn remains Minister of War we shall possess the whole German army."

No man in any country has in such a short period exercised a similar malevolent influence. Well might Liebknecht, in the course of a stormy debate, call him "Germany's evil genius." And not only did he treat the conscripts abominably, but the Landwehr men also, who came from their families every year for a course of obligatory training.

Once, in 1913, these men were being inspected by Falkenhayn, and, as was his custom, he inquired whether there were any complaints. One of the men stepped forward and complained that they were being treated worse than in their conscript days. The unfortunate spokesman was immediately arrested by von Falkenhayn's orders, and when the culprit had been led away, he turned to the regiment and said, "What has been told to me is good news. We do not take you from civil life that you may grow fat, but that you may learn to be good soldiers. Your duty is obedience. You are to be cannon fodder, nothing more."

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I take up at random two newspapers that lie on my table. In one—an English paper with a reputation for impartiality—I read: “Dense masses of Germans were advancing steadily, regardless of horrible losses. We pounded lead into them till our shoulders ached.” The *Petit Parisien*, which I have just received from a French friend, relates of one of the latest phases of the Verdun battle: “Our machine-guns and the 75’s poured in a withering fire, mowing down thousands of German soldiers. It was not war. It was a veritable butchery.”

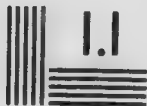
Reading that, how can I refuse the quality of bravery to the enemy? And yet I do. Those reckless advances furnish no proof of courage—to me, who have studied German methods in their own hotbeds, they afford every proof, I shall not say of cowardice, but of fear. I will tell you a true story, which will prove my contention and show you “Germany’s evil genius” as he really is.

In November, after the battle of Mülhausen, I met two German friends in Berlin. They told me how the French had driven the German regiments from the frontier, how they had captured Mülhausen, and how the great rout had been stopped by von Falkenhayn himself, who ordered the regi-



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ments to the attack. Regiment after regiment was hurled up, and thousands were slaughtered. Slowly, under the never-ending avalanche of men, the French were driven out. At one point they defended themselves from behind a six-foot rampart of dead and wounded Germans. Von Falkenhayn ordered his artillery to blow the rampart to pieces.

It was in those days when the men were not yet inured to the horror of war, and one of the officers ventured to remonstrate that their comrades were perhaps still alive. Falkenhayn replied, "The poor devils are dead. If not, they soon will be." And the German artillery sent shell after shell through the mound of the bodies of their fallen friends.

And so the Germans won the battle of Mülhausen! So they advanced at Verdun, and so at Vimy. Not because they were brave, but because they were fearful. In front are the rifles and bayonets and machine-guns of the enemy. Behind are the dread spectres of von Falkenhayn, von Haeseler and the rest of the blood-guilty Camarilla. In front lies death—perhaps. Behind lies death—certain, and a death most miserable and most terrible. For von Falkenhayn dishonours his

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victims. He who advances not is shot, after horrible torture. In the records of his regiment von Falkenhayn has given orders that the poor wretch's name is to be posted as "Vaterslandsverrater." At every roll-call his name is read, followed by the dread, "Shot—traitor to the Fatherland." To his wife, mother, or nearest relative comes from the War Office, not a letter, but a post card which all the world may read: "The — soldier has, by orders of the Military Tribunal, been executed for cowardice and treason on the field of battle. Any allowance, gratuity, or pension which may have been allotted to you by the Imperial Government is hereby annulled." The stigma on the family can only be cleansed by the death on the battlefield of the remaining male members of the family. The victim is buried—like a suicide—in unconsecrated ground.

An enemy bullet kills once. Von Falkenhayn kills many times and he kills honour. Thus are his soldiers brave, even as the red deer, which, fearful of the pursuing hounds, dashes itself over a cliff.

CHAPTER XII

THE SCHOOL FOR SPIES

LIFE as foreign language instructor to the officers' corps of the German Army was in no wise a bed of roses. For three or four years I had been chased "from Pontius to Pilatus," as the saying is. No sooner had I grown to like life in the dismal old garrison town of Torgau, in Prussian Saxony, than I received urgent instructions to proceed to Cologne. Did I make myself at home among the Rhinelanders, there came an order to report within three days to the commandant of the garrison at Thorn. From Thorn I was transferred to the War School in Berlin, and as there were certain portents that another early move was in contemplation, I took time by the forelock and sent in a petition addressed to the Director of Military Education, requesting a nomination to a vacancy in the Cadet School.

For many weeks I heard nothing, then I received a letter, signed this time by von Kopf,

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informing me that His Majesty the King and Kaiser had been graciously pleased to appoint me to a vacant tutorship in the Foreign Department of the High School of Political Science.

I found the professor a man more military than academical, and his subordinates the usual type of Prussian teachers—officers in the reserve, with the customary hideous sabre-slashes across the face. These slashes, received in the students' duels, are the outward and visible sign of Prussian aristocracy.

Von Kerzenstein introduced me to the students, a heterogeneous collection. Some, from their very features, I recognised as offshoots of the dull-brained Brandenburg landed gentry; others wore the cunning look that a cosmopolitan city like Berlin early marks on the visages of its children. And as soon as I recognised the presence of a few Jews (to the good Prussian a Jew is taboo) I knew that I had every reason to be suspicious of the Foreign Department of the High School of Political Science, and a word here and a friendly warning there soon left me in no doubt that the school was nothing more than a training-ground for common spies, where spying was taught as a fine art.

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Once I went so far as to mention to von Kerzenstein that I quite failed to see in what way political science could be imparted by teaching the students caligraphy, photography, microscopic map-drawing and a thousand and one other things, the knowledge of which is certainly of no great value to a political scientist, but he only smiled vaguely.

From knowledge which I gained then and subsequently, the idea of systematically training spies originated in the evil brain of the chief German agent at Brussels. This was a young lieutenant who had been dismissed the army on a charge of having disgraced his uniform. Shortly after his court martial he spent a holiday in the Isle of Wight, and on returning to Berlin was offered a position in Brussels, where the German offices, behind the Palais de Justice, were recognised as the chief European espionage centre. Von Hertzenfels was his name, and as far as I could learn he carried out his duties with the fullest satisfaction to his masters, and also to himself, for after the German success in Belgium, in the plans for which he spent many years, his name appeared in the list of those decorated with the Order of the Iron Cross, second class.

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I saw him frequently at his school. His work in Belgium consisted in the creation of a cleavage between Wallony and the two Flanders, and in the obtaining of any information which might assist the army in its march through Belgium.

It was after a series of failures that von Hertzenfels laid his scheme before the Great General Staff for the establishment of a school that would ensure a constant adequate supply of useful men, who had received the necessary technical education which would enable them to copy drawings, for it is sometimes bad policy to steal the originals. The General Staff adopted von Hertzenfels' idea, reorganised the entire system of European espionage, and established the High School of Political Science (Foreign Section).

As soon as it was practicable I parted company with the ingenious von Kerzenstein, but the knowledge that I had gained helped me considerably later.

After the outbreak of hostilities, in the company of foreign journalists, I went to Room 11 of the Central Police Office to obtain permission to travel to Cologne in order to investigate a story issued by the Berlin Kommandantur, to the effect that in Dr. Kaufmann's Sanatorium lay one hundred

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wounded German soldiers, whose eyes had been gouged.

Permission was readily given and, accompanied by Captain Gaedke, of the Staff, we journeyed to Cologne. It was at the time when the world wept at the stories of the German atrocities in Belgium, and whispers of the outrages began to make themselves heard in Germany. Officially, therefore, our expedition was looked on with much favour. We entered a special wing of the sanatorium, the windows of which were heavily curtained. Throwing open the doors, Gaedke theatrically exclaimed: "Heroes blinded by the Belgians as they lay wounded on the field of honour!" We examined them individually and collectively, and their stories coincided in a remarkable degree.

We returned to Berlin with a feeling of depression, most of us believing the horror that we had seen. Shortly before my arrest, which followed in November, I found the key to the mystery. True it was that the soldiers had been gouged, but not by the Belgians. The infamy of having committed the most despicable crime in history belonged to the "High School for Spies."

I had long entertained friendship with a certain clerk at the Foreign Office, whose duties consisted

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in the keeping of the records. I had called at Wilhelmstrasse in order to see whether he could not advise me of any plan by which I could succeed in leaving the country. Our conversation turned to espionage, and in proof of his contention of the remarkable German organisation, he took down a portfolio, whence he produced a document which he mentioned as having come from Hans Eckardt. I knew Eckardt to be an industrious student at the "Spy Academy," a man in the early thirties, outwardly stupid, but really cunning.

It was a short report, but it contained the whole answer to the puzzle of the blinded soldiers at Cologne. It read: "In accordance with instructions, I issued orders that one hundred wounded soldiers should be blinded. This has now been satisfactorily completed. Soldiers have been placed in the hands of the Sanitätsdienst for removal to hospital. Respectfully suggest invitation to neutral journalists." Eckardt could not have acted on his own initiative; the orders probably emanated from the General Staff through von Hertzenfels. The report is stamped "Gesehen" (Seen), both by the Berlin Kommandantur and the Press Bureau.

With such foul weapons does Germany fight.

Once again did the "Spy Academy" serve its

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purpose. On August 3, 1914, when the Crown Prince was the most popular man in Germany, the people were driven to a white-hot frenzy by the circulation of a report, issued by the Chief of Police, von Jagow, that two French spies had confessed that they had been sent from France to assassinate the Crown Prince at any cost.

I shall not easily forget how the crowds flocked at midnight to his palace, crying, "Death to the French!" and alternating their song, "I am a Prussian" with some quaint Lutheran battle hymn. Through the good offices of a friend I was enabled to be present at the trial in Moabit of the two spies. They repeated their confession with a wealth of detail that was astonishing. The court was solemn, and to complete the judicial mockery the criminals were sentenced to death. One was my old acquaintance, the French teacher at the "Spy Academy." The other was an "old boy" of the same noble institution, originally a deserter from the French Army, and after his graduation in scientific espionage, an agent-provocateur in Alsace-Lorraine, where he betrayed those of the Alsatian soldiers who were sympathetically inclined to France. But the fellows played their latest parts perfectly.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SOUL OF THE WOLF

As illustrative of the soul of the German, I will relate a happening which occurred in Belgium. It was at the time when Field-Marshal von Haeseler was making his rush through that unhappy country. I will explain here that the Great General Staff had fixed the period in which the conquest of Belgium should be completed as three weeks, and von Haeseler was very wroth with the Allies for forcing him to change his plans. He implored the help of Conrad von Hertzenfels, the chief German spy in Belgium, whom we have already met.

Von Hertzenfels had been delegated to do the nefarious work of undermining the internal defence of Belgium, and it is only due to him to say that this work was carried out ruthlessly and completely. Even at that time, when the German hordes were busy with their ghastly work in Belgium, he was masquerading in Brussels as a titled young Englishman.

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Von Haeseler appealed to Hertenfels for revenge. How that bestial revenge was carried out can best be told in his own report to the Great General Staff. I may mention that this report was shown to me by Assessor Braumüller, who then occupied the position of secretary to the staff.

When the Germans had arrived in Liège, von Hertenfels relates: "I caused an order to be issued, calling the inhabitants to assemble on the Place de l'Université, that the proclamations might be read out to them. In accordance with instructions received from Excellency von Haeseler, I had previously posted on the roof of the university several soldiers and non-commissioned officers taken from the 191st Mecklenburg Infantry regiment and from the Silesian Landwehr, who could speak Russian. These I disguised as Russian students, and in order that no hitch might take place, I placed others of our soldiers, similarly disguised, among the assembly. While Oberst R. was engaged in reading the orders my men shot at the soldiers, several of whom were killed by the first volley. Shots were also fired from among the crowd. Oberst R. gave instructions for the attendant machine-gun section to fire on the Bel-

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gians, and in the subsequent street fighting heavy casualties took place among the Belgians."

So far his report goes. For this he was decorated by the Kaiser with the Order of the Iron Cross.

Assessor Braumuller then took up the thread, and told me a story that was revolting in its absolute disregard of the elementary rules of morality.

At first the Belgians, when they heard the shots ring out, turned to flee; but the Germans could not be shaken off. Volley after volley swept through the crowd, and the cruel bullets took no pity on smiling childhood or trembling age. The hot blood of the Walloons mounted, and they fought with their hands and feet against the German bayonets, but unavailing, for their doom had been sealed by von Hertzenfels, from whom there is seldom any escape.

The best joke (to Braumuller's mind) was yet to come, for he laughed gleefully when he told me: "And to save future complications, Hertzenfels caused those of his spies who were captured to be summarily shot as franc-tireurs." Such is the story that is entered in black and white on the books of the Great General Staff.

I mention Assessor Braumuller's name here

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because he is beyond the vengeance of his masters. In March of 1915 a young French lady came to him that her passport might be endorsed. In his heavy Teutonic way he endeavoured to take liberties with her. She killed him with his own revolver.

In the light of the recent events in Ireland it may be of interest to note, that while the tragedy of the Place de l'Université was being enacted at Liège there were two deeply interested spectators, one an Irish-American journalist and the other von Haeseler.

The journalist had been sent over by the Irish-American societies to obtain proofs that the German conquest of Belgium was carried out without unnecessary cruelty. In his book, "What I saw in Belgium," the textbook which Casement caused to be distributed among the Irish soldiers in Limburg, he speaks of the Belgian barbarism in attacking inoffensive German soldiers before the University of Liège.

Here one can observe the workings of the soul of the wolf. Of the same stamp was the idea that was mooted in the early days of the war, that a German submarine flying the English flag should be sent to bombard the coast of Ireland, so that

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resentment and a feeling of hatred might be caused.

I must confess that the conduct of the German officers especially has caused me no surprise, for I have seen how decent young boys were rendered vicious, how they went to school buoyed up with honourable aspirations and the reverence of good, and how they left as dissolute rakes, ruined in body and soul.

As an example of the effects of the *furor Teutonicus*, I will relate the case of Dr. Ludwig Frank. He was a Jew, a barrister and a Socialist leader. For three weeks he harangued against the war. Towards the end of August his friend, Adolf Kaufmann, of Berlin, received a letter from him, in which he wrote: "I think I will go to the front. I cannot help it. I know as well as you that our masters called for this war to smash Socialism and save themselves from the threatened revolution. But I want to fight. I think it must be the old blood-lust that itches. I want to see real blood, and to hear the moans of those who die. I think the sight must be worth the sacrifice of all ideals." So Ludwig Frank went—and died.

His case is not uncommon. He only typifies the German innate coarseness and love of brutality,

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which, as in war, is found in peace also, for Germany is the home of those who are afflicted with all manner of gross vices, and Berlin is the only city in the world where there is a prostitute for every 232 inhabitants.

Another peculiar characteristic which one finds in Germany alone, is the prevalence of juvenile suicide, which is three times greater than that for all European countries together, with the exception of Russia, which has been in a small measure contaminated by its proximity to Hunland.

If a student at a public school fails at an examination, he generally ends his life immediately either by poison or by drowning, very seldom by shooting. If a mother interferes in the love affairs of her young daughter, the girl seeks solace in the cold clasp of the river.

Such suicides are so frequent now in Germany that they seldom receive notice in the papers. All this can be traced back to the moral decadence of an entire people, and the story of this degeneration is so lurid that these pages are scarcely the place in which to make it public.

The world will gasp in wonder when, after the war, the full story of the mark of the beast is revealed. I think that enough has been related to

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show the fibre of the German soul, which beats for cruelty and barbarism and outrage; which will sacrifice everything that the Fatherland may remain untouched.

I thought, in Russian Poland, that I had seen the last word in barbarism, but my eyes were opened when I went to East Prussia, where the female farm labourers are stripped and publicly flogged if their work fails to please their masters. Every remembrance that I have of Germany shows me in an ever-clearer light the truth of the immortal indictment of Jaurès, which cannot be reiterated too often: "The modern German has a thin veneer of civilisation, beneath which there lurks the soul of a wolf."

CHAPTER XIV

THE LADY DETECTIVE

DOWN in the aristocratic quarter that encircles the German Reichstag, or House of Parliament, hidden away among the residences of old dowagers of the Brandenburger families and retired officers—at No. 24 Roonstrasse, to be exact—there exists an institution which, I believe, is unparalleled in the whole world. Day after day there appears an announcement in the Berlin and provincial papers to the effect that "Lady detectives are wanted. Only those with knowledge of foreign languages need apply. Liberal emoluments to capable women." On the face of it this advertisement looks innocuous. In reality it hides one of the ramifications—and by no means the least important—of the international German spy system.

One day I met, in the Café National, a young English lady whom I had known as governess in a noble family. She seemed suddenly to have

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inherited wealth, for there she sat dressed in the latest fashion, leisurely sipping a glass of Rhine wine at an hour when otherwise she would have been occupied in schooling her unruly charges in the mysteries of English pronunciation or guiding them through the mazes of the French irregular verbs. I knew her too well to imagine that her life had been subjected to a moral upheaval, such as is unfortunately the case with many young and pretty English girls who venture to Berlin, and I was mystified by the explanation, which she shamefacedly gave, that she had left her pedagogic work and was now engaged as lady detective in the Argus Institute.

Many times we met subsequently, and I made it my duty to observe closely the work which she was doing, and the *modus operandi* of the Institute by which she was employed. The "Argus" apparently flourished, housed in a suite of offices, luxuriously furnished seemingly without regard to expense. I was much surprised when I learned from a friend that the institute was practically unknown in the realm of criminal investigation.

By and by I came on the track of the mystery. The Argus Institute is indirectly the creation of

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the "master spy" von Hertenfels, on the same lines as his Spy Academy, with this difference, that the institute is run exclusively by women to ensure a constant flow of trained women spies. It is directed by a Russian-German-Pole (although she herself will never admit her Russian origin), who is known to half the world as Hella von Wamberg. She is, artistically considered, a most beautiful animal, hiding an inordinate cruelty and rapacity under an exterior of winning innocence. Her raven-black hair, which in the sunlight glitters blue, and her deep brown eyes set in a "white" that is half violet, have charmed valuable secrets from otherwise steely breasts.

She was first introduced to a startled Berlin aristocracy by the hoary Polish nobleman, Count von Melouski, and within a remarkably brief period the Crown Prince, then but a Benedict of a few months, was credited by many with having usurped in her affections the place of von Melouski.

At that date, as far as my knowledge goes, she was not engaged as a German spy; but Conrad von Hertenfels, recognising that a woman with such Madonna-like features and with

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magnetic eyes that were filled with childish innocence would be invaluable to him in his "diplomatic" work, led her to the altar and gave Berlin a nine-days' wonder. At the time he was as little known as he is to-day, for Hertenfels always kept his business to himself, and those only of the inner circle knew of the immense power he wielded.

For a while the beautiful Hella vanished from the public ken, only to come forth to dazzle anew, and, coincident with her coming, arose the Argus Institute. Her work has now made her the idol of the rotund lords of the Foreign Office, and oft have I seen the Kaiser turn off from his morning canter in the Tiergarten to call at the sumptuous house in Roonstrasse of Germany's most powerful woman.

As an instance of the extreme favour and popularity which she enjoys in official circles, I may mention that on the occasion of the reunion of the three Emperors in Berlin she was given, much to the chagrin of Police Chief von Jagow, the work of supervising the foreign element and of securing the safety of their Majesties. I saw her later in a third-class carriage at Serajevo.

Through my intimate associations in the

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official world, I was able to obtain first-hand information—often from the beautiful Hella herself—concerning the working methods of her institute. The fundamental idea originated in the crafty brain of von Hertzenfels, that it is always advantageous to use native spies for subordinate but important work in preference to born Germans whose mental limitations have been recognised.

On this line Hella worked. The casual advertisement for a lady detective was the bait that hid the hook. The necessity of knowing foreign languages served as an inducement to young ladies who were desirous of bettering their prospects. I have never yet heard of an instance in which Hella von Wamberg accepted a German woman. Her appeal is directed exclusively to the French, English, Russian and Italian governesses, ill-paid and ill-nourished.

Thus is the net of Hella von Wamberg filled. 'At the time when I was not yet sure of my ground, I have seen hundreds of these young ladies answer Hella's specious advertisement in person. I have seen them, dazzled by the luxurious splendour of her rooms, hypnotised by the foul woman whose desire was to destroy them.

Hella has never turned away a likely applicant.

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All are fish that come to her net. Some there are who enter diffident and self-conscious, others hunted by the wolf of hunger, others ready to take any position that offers a security against the streets; but von Wamberg treats all alike.

In order that no suspicion might be aroused, a salary of ten pounds a month is offered as a beginning, and readily accepted. Then, as Hella explains, detective work requires a long period of training, but as "you are a likely person, my dear young lady, I will have pleasure in devoting special attention to you, so that you will soon be in a position to earn, oh! so much money." And the false-hearted Hella childishly claps her hands and laughs, while the victim wonders, if a remnant of sense is left, that the manageress of a detective institute should be so considerate.

And so the bargain is struck, and the soul of another young girl is sold to the vampire. Never yet has Hella tolerated rebellious or careless assistants. There are those who, later, when they found they had been tricked, have threatened to appeal to the consuls. Then they have mysteriously disappeared.

Even the best woman has a hankering after luxury unmarred by the trouble of the daily

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struggle for existence, and ready to accept life as it is, so long as she is not asked to do anything actively "incorrect," and it is on this that Hella's success has been built. The course of instruction is very light, but is of a nature calculated to weaken and finally destroy the moral control of the victim.

First the pupil is told to watch one of her fellow dupes, as a means of training her powers of observation. Then follows the science of disguise without the usual appliances. Then the victim is generally ordered to make the acquaintance of a gentleman, who is pointed out, and who is spoken of sometimes as a leader of an international gang, sometimes as a bank employee suspected of embezzlement. Any lie is good enough to hide the fact that the man in question is usually the military or naval attaché of one of the Great Powers. Later, the student may marvel, if she is not already lost, that she should be asked to attend lectures at the War Academy. The utility of learning the salient points of modern artillery or engineering terms may not be apparent to her.

At this stage she has reached the end of her tether. A few short weeks may see the last

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of her pseudo-freedom, and she may be found actively engaged as a spy, either in Belgium, which was the centre of the European German espionage system, or engaged in Krupps' Information Office. This latter is the more general course, and here, under the direction of men and women who are known to all the Chancelleries of the world, the poor girl receives a final polish. Out she goes into the world with keen wits—she, an English or a French lady, fighting the battle of German Kultur, luring other flies to Hella's capacious web.

That this system knows no limitations will be inferred from one case which I will briefly mention. An English girl, engaged in England in the service of Germany, sent over to Berlin her young sister, aged only about sixteen. The latter was for many years the most dangerous spy in Belgium. Only twenty-one, pretty and very rich, she played havoc with the young Belgians. She moved from Ghent to Liège, from Namur to Brussels, and everywhere she succeeded in her object. She was executed in Antwerp, while her employers were littering the roads of the Wallony with mutilated men and outraged women.

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It is a peculiar thing that for many years previous to the war Austria had no Secret Service of its own. It will explain the subservience of the once great Habsburg monarchy to the upstart Hohenzollern that both services were united in and directed from Berlin. This fact gave Hella von Wamberg the opportunity of making a *coup* that made the world ring, for at one stroke she smashed the Russian organisation of spies in Austria, captured and executed over one hundred leaders, men whose names were familiar to the high Society of Vienna, and exposed Hauptmann Riedl, an Austrian major, whom she forced to commit suicide.

CHAPTER XV

THE BEAUTIFUL VAMPIRE

At the time when the Dual Monarchy, at the instigation of Berlin, annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, there was a remarkable growth in intelligence work not only on the part of Germany and Austria, but on other sides. The Narodna was most successful. It had its spies among the official Austrian classes in Bosnia and in the other departments that bordered on the Danube. Secret instructions that were sent to the provincial governors from Vienna were known to the spies before they were delivered to the addressees. Smart work very, but the practitioners sometimes overreached themselves and found their schemes "gang agley" either through design or accident.

In one case an order was issued by the Imperial Minister of Police to the Governor of Herzegovina, commanding him to arrest various persons who had been denounced by a betrayer. This order was stolen en route, and published verbatim

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in several disaffected newspapers, with the result that the birds had flown across the Danube when the agents came to arrest them.

Again, the Artillery Invention Department had just completed a design for an anti-aircraft gun, the principal features of which were its extreme mobility, its wonderful range, and the peculiar arrangements of its sights. These plans were sent by carrier to Skoda Artillery Works, and it was only when three of the machines had been completed, and the necessary and expensive moulds laid for the hurried execution of a huge order, that it was discovered that the real drawings had been purloined, and that faked plans—correct as far as they went—had been substituted. When the guns were tested they were found to be worse than useless.

Similar leakage occurred when the idea was mooted of fitting the *Viribus Unitis*—the single Austrian Dreadnought—with exchangeable engines, whereby oil fuel could be used, as it was even then recognised that war would bring a serious shortage of coal.

Once more information leaked out when, on Berlin's instructions, the Austrian Government took steps to gain control of the Galician oil-fields,

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which were then in the hands of a Franco-British group of speculators.

You will readily understand that Austria was in a bad way, owing to these repeated leakages of valuable information; so bad that there was mutual distrust among the members of the Government.

It was then that the German military attaché suggested the help of Hella von Wamberg. Hertenfels was unavailable. He was convalescing in the Isle of Wight, "for the benefit of his health," as the attaché maliciously said. Incidentally, he was engaged on a project for revictualling the submarines, which were looked upon, even then, as the weapon that was to destroy Britain's naval supremacy. His root idea was that, owing to its dimensions, a submarine was limited in its activity, and, being limited, was useless except in a small degree. Submarine bases are good, but are liable to discovery, and he hit on the idea of the mine-layer, which laid not mines, but huge casks of petrol and other necessities at a certain depth underneath the surface at designated revictualling stations.

And so, as Hertenfels was otherwise engaged, Hella got her chance, and seized it with both her beautiful little hands--hands which have muscular

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strength enough to choke the life out of a brawny man. This incident belongs to a story that I shall tell later, how she caught her victim as he was stealing across the border in the month of July, 1914, with the German mobilisation plans.

There was nothing singular in the fact that the Gräfin Rothheim should prefer to make a tour of Southern Austria rather than remain in the dissolute salons of Berlin; and with such a wonderfully magnetic personality, no one was astonished that she speedily became exceedingly popular in the higher official circles.

Countess Rothheim was the astute Hella, and she always flew at big game. She settled in Vienna, where she made a vivid impression on the Viennese, and now began a chase that was to end with her complete victory. She began by excluding from suspicion the members of the Habsburg family, and by including every prominent member of Vienna society. She ordered a cohort of spies from Berlin, and by the process of elimination she soon decided that the traitor was to be found in the environs of the Ballplatz.

At her instigation the Austrian War Minister was hurriedly invited by the Emperor to the castle

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of Schönbrunn, and while he was absent she personally ransacked his official residence. A similar course was pursued with the remaining Ministers whose positions could enable them to obtain the information that had been sold.

Several months had passed, and beyond the capture of an odd score of international spies she had nothing to show for her work. And then there came her assistant, Trude Wernher—the “Seductive,” as she is called—with most significant news concerning Major Riedl, head of the Austrian Spy Bureau, major in the Imperial Army, and translator before the military courts by which foreign agents were sentenced. He was the darling of his Emperor, but von Wamberg fastened on him. He spent lavishly on her, and ultimately married her. They journeyed to Switzerland and to Italy on their honeymoon. The scandal papers of Vienna were filled with paragraphs concerning the intrigue with Riedl, who had deserted his wife and his month-old baby.

Suddenly, in a flash, came the *dénouement* that was ever to be expected where Hella von Wamberg had a finger in the pie. Riedl was confined to barracks. He thought this mild form of arrest

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was merely an intimation from his military superiors that his mode of life with the entrancing Hella was not looked upon with favour.

For three days he dared not move, and his innamorata kept away from him, for she was engaged in unravelling the final threads of her charge that was to send to death the man who for months had found happiness in her arms.

Riedl wondered how long his imprisonment was to last. He was answered when, headed by the Minister of War, a deputation of the senior officers of his regiment came to his room.

In a chilly voice the War Minister told of his treachery. How, for many years, he had sold the plans of all the important fortresses and had revealed the designs of the artillery. How Hella von Wamberg had finally caught him when he, the War Minister, had issued, at her suggestion, apparently to everyone, but in reality only to himself, secret mobilisation instructions. He told him to whom he had sold the plans, how much Riedl had received for them, and many other things that von Wamberg had discovered. The Emperor refused to allow Riedl to be court martialled, but he, the War Minister, as his military superior, ordered him to kill himself before morning.

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At this stage Hella von Wamberg entered the room and, jauntily saluting Riedl, told him that it would be better if he would commit suicide immediately rather than wait till the following morning. With her own hand she held his revolver against his temple, and ordered the half fainting man to pull the trigger. There was a dull sound, and the body of the Major fell heavily to the ground. Her victory did not end with Riedl's death, for she cleared Vienna of foreign spies, most of whom were executed.

This was Hella's big triumph. It was not her only one, but it made her position in Berlin impregnable. She was received in audience by the Kaiser, and it is said that she is looked upon with great favour by the Archduke Ferdinand. The Emperor of Austria sent her, not through the usual diplomatic channels, but by the intermediary of his military attaché in Berlin, a luxuriantly diamond-studded watch inscribed, "As a souvenir of the invaluable services rendered to my house."

She is no longer outshone by her husband (Conrad von Hertzenfels). Indeed, as the then War Minister, von Falkenhayn, once said, "Your masterpiece, Hertzenfels, was when you gave us Hella." Exercising a wise discretion, she is

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famous now, not as Hella von Wamberg, the spy and directress of the Spy Institute, but as one who is favourably regarded by the highest circles, and whose opinion is always sought in matters relating to the work of the huge machine of the German Intelligence Bureau.

CHAPTER XVI

SECRET SERVICE WOMEN

I HAVE spoken of Trude Wernher, who also has made for herself a name in the region of international espionage. She is a Berliner born and bred. Her father was a veterinary surgeon, and her mother an English lady from one of the London suburbs. Wernher is not her real name, as she was ostracised by the family. In Hamburg she soon became known among the habitués of the cafés chantants. Afterwards—it was in the early days of the cinematograph boom—she became a “picture” actress. Again she disappeared for a time, probably to a training-school, for when she returned to Berlin she was then a subordinate agent in the pay of the German Secret Service.

She is still quite young, scarcely thirty years of age, a most beautiful woman, and the intimate friend of the Crown Prince.

At the time of the marriage of the Kaiser's daughter, Princess Luise, with Ernst of Bruns-

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wick, the Crown Prince raised a hubbub in the Imperial family by insisting that his friend should be invited to the ceremony. Not only that, but he succeeded in having her invited to the subsequent festivities in the palace, and his conduct was the cause of a scandal that almost led to a royal divorce. In England most people imagine the Crown Prince to be a brainless nincompoop. Never was a greater mistake, for his brain is as keen as any in Germany, and in addition to his cleverness he is cunning.

At a villa in Danzig the Crown Prince and all the notabilities of the German Diplomatic Service and the army used to meet. It was the headquarters of the Camarilla, that group of high officers and nobles who really rule Germany, and whose acquaintance the reader has already made; and their deliberations were attended by three of the most famous—or notorious, if you so prefer it—women in Germany, Hella von Wamberg, Trude Wernher and Bronia. I do not know the real name of the last-mentioned, nor perhaps does anyone else. She masquerades under various titles from time to time, but in the Secret Service document she is spoken of as Bronia.

It is a peculiar trinity—von Wamberg, the spy-

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brain, ruthlessly on the scent, ever seeking her victims or winning new victories; Trude Wernher, the demure and silent, a woman who suffered most when her soul was young and impressionable, and who now lives only for revenge; and lastly, the laughing Bronia, the brainless, who cannot devise a plan, but dares everything to obtain what she desires.

To be a spy is hard work, and so Hella von Wamberg found it. In the heyday of her glory she often boasted, in those circles where these things are spoken of, that she was *the* woman spy of Germany. Now, when her department has grown enormously, rivalling in importance even that of her husband Conrad von Hertzenfels, she has been compelled by force of circumstances to delegate most of her work without abdicating any of her authority.

Hella is too valuable, too much a support of the Central Empires, to be allowed to wander into countries where the discovery of her real mission might lead to a long term of imprisonment, if not to something worse. She always had the *flair* of detecting latent talent. In her methods of training she shows the finesse of genius. She takes a pretty midinette in Paris,

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who up to the meeting with von Wamberg had only thought or dreamt of pretty underclothes and gay lovers. In two years' time the Parisian appears for a course of training, sometimes in the offices of the German Consul-General in Liverpool or Marseilles. In four years she patrols a European capital, and what she doesn't know of the dark, devious and dirty ways of underground treachery and intrigue is not worth knowing.

Thus has Hella gathered around her a cohort of dangerous women—dangerous because they are mostly beautiful, always clever, and always trained to the last degree of efficiency. In this way she has gained those whom she proudly terms her lieutenants: the Spaniard Lisette Mardillo, the Bavarian Anna Schause, the Englishwoman Ruth Redfern, and the Franco-Belgian Valentine Desbois, all of whom are known internationally as the most skilful agents that haunt those places where valuable information may be obtained.

In the season one of the sorry gang may be seen on the Riviera, or at one or other of the fashionable resorts. Not that they are by any means dolls fit only to swagger in fine clothing and worm secrets out of semi-intoxicated male worshippers.

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I have already told you that Hella von Wamberg herself strangled a would-be German traitor. Just as the captains of all German steamers receive sealed envelopes containing a decode for a portion of the Zeta cipher, enough to enable them to understand the message that "Uncle Frederick is ill; return at once," so was it with every stationmaster in Germany.

The War Lords assure us that the sword was forced into their hands, but it will give them some trouble to explain, when the time for explanations come, why these code messages issued to the stationmasters were recalled three times during the end of the year 1913, and why the final envelope was issued in April, 1914. For the final envelope contained the mobilisation plans for the war that was to break out in August! Surely this is proof sufficient that Germany's preparations had been made months before the existence of any crisis between Russia and Austria.

These sealed orders are packed in a large parchment envelope, liberally bespattered with wax, and labelled "Nur im Falle des Krieges zu öffnen" ("Only to be opened in case of war"). Inside this large outer envelope there is a small red linen cover containing full instructions as to

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the workings of the railways and the guarding of strategic points. The recipient is responsible for this envelope with his life.

Occasionally the inspector comes round, either from von Wamberg or von Hertenfels. Sometimes their custody is not checked for a month; in other cases (notably at Eydtkuhnen, on the Russian frontier), I have known them to be checked twice a day in the course of a full week.

Three days before the declaration of war the control on the Alsatian railway system took place, and one envelope was missing. Unobtrusively the French, Belgian and Luxemburg borders were closed, and the whole craft of the German spy system was put on the scent. The stationmaster was guiltless, but as he was unable to deliver that which had been entrusted to him, he met with the usual death. Incidentally, I might mention that the death sentence has invariably been carried out even in peace-time, with the result that many employees on the State railways refuse to accept promotion with its dread responsibility.

It was the night when I heard the Kaiser announce from his balcony that an ultimatum had been sent to Russia requesting instant de-

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mobilisation. In Wilhelmstrasse and Leipzigerstrasse there was much flurry and scurry, for the missing envelope had not been found. Inside were the instructions that all trains were to be diverted to Rhineland, to be at the disposal of the Commander of the district of Cologne. This was sufficient to show Germany's enemies that the blow was not to be struck through Alsace or Lorraine, but through the gap of the Wallony into the heart of France. To von Falkenhayn, the Minister of War, it was clear that the documents were still in Germany.

With only twenty-four hours at her disposal—for all her trained assistants had failed her—Hella von Wamberg had to bestir herself. She was not at the end of her resources. Grete Schnurmann enjoys the reputation of being uncannily clever, but she is also hideously ugly. She never does any work outside the borders of the Empire, for there is no escape for her from dangerous recognition. She held a position at the Spy Bureau no less important than that of von Wamberg, and Hella at once requisitioned her.

In Treves the two women found their man, disguised as a German priest, rubicund and

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merry. Behind them Germany was massing her troops for the glorious "drive" promised by von Haeseler, and the two women followed the traitor towards the border. Then they separated, Schnurmann stealing up to a guard-house of the frontier soldiers, while Hella drew closer to her quarry in the belt of trees that skirts Luxemburg. Here she saw dimmed lights and heard whispers that were not German. She felt that now the traitor must be stopped; his fate was glanced at in Chapter XV. To shoot was but to attract attention and was clumsy, anyhow; stabbing was unsafe, for there was the almost certain risk of a yell from the victim, and noise would be fatal. There remained strangulation, and so Hella tripped noiselessly over the moss-bedded ground until her hands encircled her victim's throat. Slowly but surely she strengthened her pressure, and with her knee against the man's spine she forced him down. When he reached the ground he was dead. While his accomplices were waiting but a few feet away, Hella secured the invaluable envelope and returned to Treves as quietly as she had come.

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE

GRETE SCHNURMANN, whom we have just met, was Zahlmeisterin (pay-mistress) of the Women Spy Bureau in Germany, and it is said that she is not a nigger-driver. Under von Hertzenfels, who now employs men only, payment is by results.

A much more elastic system prevails in that part of the espionage system directed by von Wamberg. The beginner, during her initial stages in one or other of the European ports, receives a salary of 200 marks per month, approximately £10, in addition to which she is allowed to send in expense sheets, covering incidental outgoings, such as personal expenditure on dress and toilet articles.

It sounds laughable to hear ugly Schnurmann impressing on a novice the extreme importance of dress, and especially dainty underwear. "A woman will sell anything or anybody for beautiful lingerie" is one of her favourite expressions, and though one would not believe it, I have heard on

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credible authority that this feminine love of soft and silky things was the cause of her own fall. Each woman spy has an account open in the central book, in which she is debited with all the money remitted to her, and credited with the market value of all information obtained directly through her.

Before the war one might have taken up the *Berliner Tageblatt* or the *Vossische Zeitung*, or any of the newspapers that cater for the tastes of the educated middle-class, and read: "Gesucht wird Privatsekretärin. Müß franzozisch und englisch beherrschen." Translated, this reads: "A lady private secretary is required. Must have a thorough knowledge of French and English."

Sometimes the advertisement changed its form, but its essentials remained, and the address was always, "Paul Muller, Bristol Hotel, Berlin." Sometimes he was a financier, sometimes patent agent, sometimes engineer, but no matter how his profession changed, the fact remained that Paul Muller required a private secretary with a good knowledge of foreign languages.

Hella von Wamberg had found that while her "lady detective" scheme was working exceedingly well she just failed to entrap those who would have been of the greatest assistance to her, but who,

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through education and breeding, revolted at the idea of undertaking investigation work. She desired to recruit the kind of girl who would be attracted by the prospect of working for a prominent and wealthy gentleman in the capacity of private secretary.

The result was that Herr Paul Muller, *alias* Prince Otto Hochberg, scion of a noble house, international criminal and degraded officer, arrived at the Bristol Hotel and began his dirty work of touting for victims to fill the net of Hella. He was a man of engaging exterior and of a personality that he knew how to make charming. His rooms at the hotel were simply but expensively furnished, calculated favourably to impress the mind of a woman or girl who was longing for luxury.

Sometimes he masqueraded as a German-American, with large landed interests in the Empire. Sometimes he was a capitalist engaged in speculation on the Russian oil-fields. Very few slipped through his hands of those whom he desired to win. He met them largely on the question of salary, and the women—already half-hypnotised by his rooms in the "Bristol," which to the Berliner represents the last word in the *chic*—were usually

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hustled into an ill-considered decision to undertake the work by Muller's off-hand remark, "I am now going for a month's holiday to the Riviera, and would require your services immediately," or, "I am going to Switzerland for some winter sport." He would leave his victims to understand that they would have plenty of time in which to amuse themselves in these delectable places, as he himself would be busily engaged with Frau Muller and his family, who had preceded him.

He went and he returned, but the "private secretary" stayed where he had left her. Probably she had fallen into the close grip of Hella von Wamberg, who usually masqueraded as Frau Muller.

Hella von Wamberg tried impartially all plans which offered a prospect of being able to ensure a steady roll of recruits. The work is wearing and the losses are heavy. Since the second Balkan War the Continent has been overrun with plotters and counter-plotters, and many a beautiful assistant of Hella's is dressed in the grey garb of the convict.

In a previous chapter I spoke, *en passant*, of still another of the many tricks used by Hella von Wamberg in her untiring efforts to ensure for

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Germany's spy system a regular flow of educated recruits, who, as I have heard, have proved most valuable helpmates.

The usual course was that instructions were issued to the German Consuls-General in fortified districts, such as, let us say, the Adriatic coastline, to have inserted in a local literary journal, in such a manner as to leave no trace of its authorship, the following advertisement :

"Literary Agency desires the services of capable lady for descriptive Nature series. High rates paid for good material."

In the majority of cases several applicants sent their letters to the box number indicated. A few days of anxious waiting for the would-be journalists, and then came a letter from the editorial offices of the *Wanderlust* in Berlin, a magazine that had its origin in the fertile brain of Hella von Wamberg.

Latterly, when this trick flourished and succeeded beyond the dreams of its originators, *Wanderlust* (or *Travel Talk*, as we would call it) was really published, but was supplied only against prepaid subscription. It was directed by Fraulein Marthe Bergh, a Leipzig woman of Swedish descent.

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I remember how, at the time when she was engaged with Prince Wilhelm zu Wied, in Albania, an article appeared each week over her signature in the *Praktische Berlinerin*, a woman's magazine.

I have often read those letters sent out from the offices of the *Wanderlust* to the dupes who were slowly but surely being drawn into the web. The usual form was that the chief editress believed that the applicant would be able to give satisfaction, the sham programme of *Wanderlust* was sketched—to teach the creed of the out-of-doors life and the trained study of Nature in all her aspects. The necessity of setting down the merest details was impressed on the authoress, and she was warned of the sin of inexactitude.

Having thus been brought to a proper state of mind, she was requested to write a descriptive article on the beauties of the coast, let us say, between Ancona and Loreto, to be accompanied, if possible, with photographs or illustrations. As soon as this article was delivered and examined, a cheque was forwarded to the writer. Although in the majority of the cases the information was of no value, nevertheless, in every way the intended victim was cozened into the belief that here at hand

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lay an easy and honourable method of earning additional pin-money.

I have watched this trick in operation in four countries, and always have I found that the applicants were filtered and whittled down until only those ladies remained who, by reason of the influence of their families, as well as the aptitude they had disclosed, would be able to help effectively the German system.

At the time of which I write Europe was in the throes of an activity in espionage hitherto unknown, and in every country suspected foreigners were carefully watched. It would have been dangerous and foolhardy for a German to have been found with pencil and camera in certain districts, but in several cases that came under my notice the daughter of the local chief of police, or magistrate, or doctor, attracted by the charms of literature, walked foolishly where no foreigner durst tread.

In most cases the victims were young girls just blossoming into womanhood after their years in the high schools, and the proud parents were so lost in their admiration of the literary talents of their daughter, that they were blind to the fact that information was being disclosed which should be withheld.

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In one case which I especially remember, but concerning which I do not wish to speak at any length, the daughter of a junior officer belonging to a nation which is now one of the Allies, delivered to the offices of *Wanderlust* a series of eighteen articles entitled, "Life in a Frontier Fortress." When the series was finished everything about that particular place was known to the German spy bureau.

The crash came when the secret police of the country arrested the officer's daughter on a charge of complicity in espionage. When she was released two days later her father killed her and then shot himself.

In another case, the daughter of a doctor living on the Adriatic sent a series of articles entitled "My Friend the Sea," in which she told of the configuration of the coast-line, detailed the adjacent bases of her country's navy, spoke of the depths of water in the creeks at the different tides, and, in an attempt to make clear the scheme of its geology, wrote of the shelving, sandy bottom.

The spot of which she wrote was found, a few months ago, to have been used as a base for supplies for German submarines.

Most readers have heard of the wonderful ex-

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actitude of the war maps of the Great General Staff of the German Empire. But how has this exactitude been obtained? The red lines that criss-cross, and the pale blue lines that show the rivers, are symbolical of the blood and tears of the young girls who supplied the necessary information. How many fortresses and towns have been delivered over to the Germans by young girls who were, perhaps, staunch patriots, is known only to the German Great General Staff; but I can guess, and I must half admire the thoroughness and cleverness of the redoubtable Hella von Wamberg, who, unfortunately, is still working.

Not so Marthe Bergh. In consequence of the intense repressive measures in Russia, Germany had been deprived of many of her chief spies, and the Staff gave a sigh of delight when Marthe Bergh offered her services in the hope of making good at least some of the loss.

She travelled as an old and infirm woman to a certain point of the coast, and journeyed in company with her benevolent old doctor, who expatiated at great length on the necessity of travel and open air for his dear patient. They settled down in a fishing village that overlooked the North Sea. She and he made friends with the

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fishermen, as strangers will, and in a little village no one wondered that she went to bid them adieu when they departed at night on their arduous and dangerous mission.

So matters progressed for several months, and the doctor, now and again, made a journey to Holland on business relating to his practice.

Suddenly came the tragedy. Marthe was arrested, together with two fishermen, by the authorities of the country whose hospitality she had abused, and the old doctor escaped capture by shooting himself. Marthe received a sentence of ten years' imprisonment. The medical man was Moritz Gundermann, ex-university student of Leipzig, and known to the Secret Services of all European countries.

With the capture of Marthe Bergh a blow was dealt to the organisation of Hella von Wamberg, a blow which, though it was not necessarily fatal, had the temporary effect of throwing the machine out of gear.

It is a peculiar fact that in spite of magnificent inducements traitors have been conspicuous by their absence in the Women Spy Bureau; and this may be ascribed to the princely manner in which Hella treats those of her assistants who, in

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the battle of wits that espionage really is, prove their worth.

Those who fail, fail early in their career, when their potentialities for harm are exceedingly small; and those who in the trying period of their novitiate, when they are subject to a close surveillance, show signs of weakness are cleared away, some to the common houses of Germany or South America, some to an unknown grave. For Hella and her machine are not fastidious as to the means employed. Rotterdam can tell the tales of some tragedies in which young lives have perished.

I remember one case that occurred a few months before the war. A young Belgian lady, Valentine van E., had been entrapped by the "journalist trick," concerning which I have already spoken. She had been "caught" in Luxemburg and been rendered amenable by the use of the familiar weapon of blackmail. She was high-spirited, and even when she was enrolled as a regular woman spy gave her chiefs many anxious moments. For some months she had been kept employed inside the Empire on one pretext or another, and then had been sent, as a final polish, to Krupps' Correspondence Bureau, where she had spied impartially on Germany's Allies and enemies.

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She was a good actress, for she succeeded in dispelling the suspicions she had previously aroused. Then Hella von Wamberg, as a recognition of her merit, gave her the commission of reporting on the Scheldt, with headquarters at Ghent and Flushing.

I met her once in Ghent and travelled with her in a tramp steamer down the canal to the sea. She meditated some revenge, and had hidden her mission so very carelessly that even the unsophisticated Belgian and Dutch police watched her.

The moment came when she thought she could strike. She had procured plans of a fortress, and in order that she might involve them in her ruin, she had, on some pretext or other, invited Hella von Wamberg, Marthe Bergh and Conrad von Hertenfels to meet her in a certain hotel.

Had she succeeded the entire spy machine would have been wrecked; but she was a poor fool to think she could match her brains against those of the beautiful Hella. She had been watched, and when the police arrived at the hotel they found the nest empty.

Valentine was taken to prison, and next morning the warders found her lying on her pallet dead. A night garment had been crushed into her mouth,

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and on her pillow the only clue available was a piece of cardboard, resembling an unprinted visiting card, on which was written, "With greetings" (Mit Grüßen). How she had been killed no one ever learned. Circumstances, however, pointed strongly to the fact that she owed her doom to Hella, who never forgives, and who knows how to prevent prisoners from revealing any secrets.

I have spoken in these pages frequently of Krupps' Correspondence Bureau, and it may be interesting to explain the origin and development of this branch of Germany's espionage system. At the outset of Hella's career as mistress-spy, at the time when she founded the Lady Detective Institute, she discovered that she was working with virgin material. Though the woman spy has been for years past a favourite character in sensational fiction and melodrama, I can safely say that with the exception of one of our Allies, women were rarely employed save in administrative work.

Up to the time when Hella dazzled the international agencies Germany's female spies numbered three, none of whom was brilliant or dangerous. Conrad von Hertzenfels in his Spy Academy was working with very different material. His

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scholars had either served their years in some army, or had at least a smattering of science, but those whom Hella von Wamberg entrapped were governesses, or lady clerks, or teachers of foreign languages. They had only one qualification, and that was their education; they knew nothing of systems of combustion, or steel mixings, or plan drawings, or rifles. They were rough diamonds, and it was Hella's business to polish them. It is useless to speak of magazine-guns to one who has little or no conception of what is meant by the word.

It was when she had wrestled for months with her first pupils that Hella conceived the idea of sending them to Krupps' artillery works by an arrangement with the General Staff. At first they were told to observe the various stages of manufacture, and to memorise the technical terms and their meanings.

In contact with the actual article, their trained brains stood them in good stead; and then came the second development. Krupps possess an internal system of observation that is unsurpassed, and Hella's pupils were instructed to pit their wits against the minions of Krupps as a means of developing their powers and resources. The game

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went on stage by stage until their education was deemed to be perfected.

The Correspondence Bureau is the recognised final training-ground. It spies impartially on itself and Germany and Germany's Allies and enemies. It bribes Prussian artillery officers, but the information that it gains is locked in its own archives and is never used to the detriment of the Fatherland, though it is used commercially. It watches over the foreign spies who gain access to jealously guarded works as labourers. Into this vortex Hella threw her pupils, and after a few months their knowledge was more than sufficient for Hella's purpose. Krupps' Correspondence Bureau still remains a powerful auxiliary.

Such is the story of the system worked by Hella von Wamberg, a woman who has risen to such heights in Germany that even the great generals bow before her.

CHAPTER XVIII

DEVIL'S WORK IN BELGIUM

THIS chapter is based on conversations which I had with a German soldier in Rotterdam. He was a deserter from a Mecklenburg Infantry Regiment, and had succeeded in escaping over the closely guarded border to Holland. His name is of no importance. I shall call him Julius Janz, which, without being exact, is near enough for all practical purposes. He is posted in the records of his regiment as "missing, presumably dead," and is content to remain so. He deserted, not because he is pro-Ally or anti-German, but because, to use his own words, he did not see any reason why he should continue to fight and run the risk of being killed that others might profit by his death.

He is a German, typical in everything except in the want of that blustering and over-bearing patriotism, which is the hall-mark of the true "Prusko," as the Dutch call them. He is a

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product of the large German cities. Of his past life he remained eloquently silent, and from several points in his story I firmly believe that he has, at one time or another, been a member of the "Strafkompagnie," or "Punishment Companies," in the German Army.

I met him by chance in the Zuid Hollandsche Restaurant in Rotterdam, where he was sitting, well groomed and well fed, conveying the impression rather of a senior clerk or commercial traveller. Many days passed ere we were sufficiently familiar to talk, and it was only when his tongue had been repeatedly loosened with the deadly schnapps that he consented to tell me his story.

As was to be expected, the first part was merely a description of roughly hewn personal impressions. No man who participated in the mad invasion of Belgium can have any concrete knowledge of the scenes of horror through which he passed. But I will let Julius tell his story in his own way.

"I was serving my last year in the — Regiment stationed at Rostock. Since the month of June we had noticed that the discipline, always iron, had become stiffer and more exacting. No

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one knew for what cause, for we were, apart from a few escapades with the civilians, a well-conducted regiment. Some of us had a premonition, and were not surprised when on the twenty-eighth of July we suddenly entrained for an unknown destination. We travelled for hours, and it was only when we were unloaded at Cologne that we knew something serious was going to happen, for here we received our 'iron rations.' Some of the comrades broke down when the 'old boys' gleefully told us of the probability of war.

"We marched out to Aix-la-Chapelle, and then one glorious night stole past the black-and-white barriers that marked the frontiers of Prussia and planted our foot on Belgian soil. We seized the station at Herbesthal, burnt a lot of outbuildings that might have hindered us, and killed a few of the Customs officers.

"Up to then we had had no losses. Our advance across the border had been mere child's play, but suddenly things began to happen. While we were holding the station many other regiments had advanced to hold the lines by which we were to attack Lüttich [Liège] and Namur.

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"Old Feldmarschall von Haeseler, who, as we say, never skulked behind when hot work was to be done, set out in the Staff car from Aix-la-Chapelle. He thought probably that the road had been well cleared, but when his car got to the ravines he was met with such a shower of bullets that he was forced to turn back. That did not please him; nor did the fact that he had received a deep flesh wound add to his good temper.

"Then the merriment began. Orders were issued that the Belgian peasantry had risen in arms to murder in cowardly fashion the German soldiers, and by means of a Tagesbefehl [Order of the Day] the officers and non-commissioned officers were commanded to see that no misplaced kindness should be allowed to interfere with the safety of the troops. Myself, I think that the francs-tireurs were the enraged smugglers of every nationality in whose domain we then were, but orders are orders.

"The sharpshooting went on as if it was well organised, but we soon had the trouble in hand. You can easily imagine it for yourself. Every officer, 'old boy' and private was his own judge, jury and executioner. We slew everything within sight, sometimes with the rifle, but when we

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had time with the bayonet. It was dangerous to be lenient, as those who were not zealous enough were moved up to the lines before Liège, and we all knew what that meant. Some of us began to nick our rifle-butts for every Belgian to our credit, but we soon got tired, and, besides, the Ordnance Master issued an order that rifles were not to be defaced.

"When I come to think of it now it was terrible, but what can one expect? If you give a tiger a taste of human blood he is not to be blamed if he expects it always, and you know us. You know what the barrack life is, and when one has been through the mill for two or three years one loses all mercy.

"Things seemed to be going badly with us at Lüttich. The Staff had intended to rush it and the other strong places in the Wallony before the Belgians were organised. Up to then we had chased them like a flock of sheep, but at Liège they repaid us. As is von Haeseler's way, he crammed everything into the machine. My regiment was ordered up. I fought three days and three nights without sleeping, and mostly without food, except what we could steal.

"Liège was hell. I saw red-hot cannons

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throwing out red-hot shells, while the infantry-men who had been 'abkommandiert' to help the battery crews poured bucket after bucket of water, sometimes across the sizzling barrels, sometimes in the faces of the naked gunners. It was so hot that most of them had thrown off all clothes; some stood and fought and swore in smoke-blackened barrack underclothing.

"Haeseler was a brute. One after another he threw regiments up to the front. None of them durst break, because he had posted the machine-gun section behind them, and when they halted or wavered a drum of bullets was rolled off into the stragglers as an incentive to push on.

"My regiment took part in three massed attacks against the fortress. Finally we were drawn back to the rear to reform with the 1st Reserve Regiment. We came out of the inferno before Liège only thirteen strong and every one wounded. The other comrades had either been blown to bits by the fortress guns or by our own machine-gun section.

"Away back at the rear, where, as a cure, I was detailed to do railway patrol, I met an American journalist, who thought that this war was going to be one of those comic-opera affairs

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that they have from time to time in America; he told me that he had been carried unconscious from the battle of Liège, where he had fainted at the sight of the bloodshed. While I was on patrol we captured a full trainload of Belgian troops, who were fresh from their depot and had never fired a shot. They had overrun their halting-place, and steamed slowly into a station that was in German possession.

"On thinking over those days I have come to the conclusion that there was some good reason at the back of the Staff's mind for ordering my regiment from Rostock against Belgium. We would have been of greater use on the Eastern front, where things were not going at all favourably. The selection of the troops does not seem to have been left to chance, and it is a most unearthly coincidence that the regiments were taken from exclusively Protestant regions. For myself, I am emancipated. I am a free-thinker; but I must wonder why the Mecklenburgers, the Saxons, the non-Catholic Bavarians, the comrades from Hesse and Brunswick and East Prussia were sent to Belgium; perhaps it was because they had not ever religion in common with the Belgians, or perhaps because they would more willingly obey the

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orders given with regard to churches, nuns and priests.

"Though we had battered the town, there was still spirit left in the Walloons—too much for von Haeseler's taste—and we received orders to tolerate nothing approaching active unfriendliness. But they seemed to have a good organisation. Many Belgian soldiers were still in hiding, and, with the help of the francs-tireurs, teased us unmercifully. Once I was standing at the door of my billet, when a bullet smashed the pipe in my mouth. I was enraged, because I could not find the sniper, so I took my landlord and shot him. But I had still lost my pipe.

"Then we got orders to hold a wholesale search of the town, and to shoot summarily any Belgian found in the possession of weapons. Old Haeseler was becoming nervous about his communications with Cologne, whence we were drawing all our supplies. And the francs-tireurs were behind us. Sometimes they sniped the driver and escort of a commissariat train and exploded the ammunition. Sometimes they slept happy with the consciousness of having killed a Staff officer.

"It was in Liège that Prince Joachim got wounded. They told in the Berlin papers after-

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wards that he had been wounded while leading a charge, but we in Liège knew that a sniper's bullet had met him. It stands to reason that one cannot receive a wound in the back of the body if one is in front of the troops. Anyhow, both Joachim and von Haeseler determined to clear Liège. Somebody—they said they were Russian students—obligingly tried to initiate a revolt by firing from the parapet of the university at the massed troops [Chapter XIII].

"We started then. We beat and bayoneted the people off the streets, and beat and bayoneted them out of their houses again. We had orders to spare nothing, and the orders were executed to the last letter.

"The fun of the fair came in the evening. The Staff ordered that, as the reward of our zeal, we were to have the freedom of the town. We had received orders to proceed into the interior on the following day, and we determined to enjoy ourselves. We had seen that the next day was to be the end for many of us. Whether the Belgian enjoyed it is another question.

"Shortly after we left Liège our regiment was reinforced by a siege battery of Austrians. They were regular devils, and we had much trouble with

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them; it was only after we had shot twelve of them that we had any peace in the regiment. Nobody minded stealing from the Belgians, for that was licensed, but the Austrian 'rabbits' used to steal from us. We had some very heavy fighting after Liège, and from the orders that were being issued from time to time, it seemed that things were worse at the rear.

"The frontier smugglers had ambushed themselves farther down in the Wallony, and they were being helped by the populace.

"We first noticed that the field post office broke down badly. For some reason or other this branch of the service had been left in the hands of the civilian administration, and the Berliners were afraid to risk their skins in running the gauntlet.

"Our next trouble came when old von Haeseler outdistanced his commissariat, and we received orders that each man had to fend for himself in the matter of provisions. As it was left to us, we lived like fighting cocks, until we found that the 'verdamnte' Belgians began to burn all the surplus provisions.

"It was when we fought our way through the Belgian and French armies before Louvain that the 1914 bayonet with the saw edge was issued.

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Officially we were told that it was only to be used as a weapon against barbed wire, but we used it against everything and everybody.

"I shall never forget the time when the Commandant called for greater stringency against disaffected civilians, and in support of this order each soldier was handed a 'revenge call,' signed by the committee of German Refugees from Antwerp, who had fled to Germany and Holland. It related some horrible things that had been done to the Germans while we were at Herbesthal, and as it was signed by the President of the Reichstag and the Kaiser's chaplain, we had to believe it. Freiherr von Bolle—our regimental commander—addressed us and said: 'You have read what your brothers and sisters have suffered. Let the hand of the Fatherland lie heavily on its enemies!' And so it was. But enough has already been written on this subject, and I want to forget some of the things I saw.

"Soon we approached Louvain. There has been much written about the sack of this town. We, of course, had our spies there, and they reported that there was much disaffection caused by the clergy, but no word of open hostility. However, Louvain was decided on as the example.

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"The fun began when, by accident, one company of Saxon soldiers, who had entered the town later in the night, fired on one of the Landwehr regiments which was standing guard on the square before the station. The Saxons had not known of the arrival of the Landwehr men, who were not dressed in the field grey uniform and pickelhaube [spiked helmet], but in Prussian blue and the old shako that dated from '70. The Belgian soldiers were also clothed in blue, and in a fashion the mistake could be understood.

"The alarm was sounded, and the officers told us that we were surrounded by the Belgian and British troops. The Belgians seemed to be liberally provided with weapons, and after a while they fought us to a standstill, for we were dead tired.

"As things had not turned out to the Staff's expectations, we were called off till reinforcements hurried up, and then we began to take hostages. By this time the upper part of the town where the university is situated was burning, and we retired behind the station. The francs-tireurs were still busy. They had captured some machine-guns from us, and they shot from the roof.

"The Yellow Dragoons, the Berlin regiment, threw down their arms and refused to shoot be-

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cause they were so tired that they could scarcely stand. They were not punished then, but in the one big fight we had before Antwerp they were dismounted and sent to cross the river. I have not heard that any of them survived. After the pacification of Louvain we had a riotous night dance in the public garden.

"It was only when we reached Brussels that we had our first good rest after leaving Germany, but we were soon busy again. Something had gone wrong with the blood-vessels in my head, and I was detailed for police duty in the capital.

"We were then transferred from the Great General Staff to the jurisdiction of the Intelligence Bureau, and I had a splendid time, though the underhand work of spying and denouncing was not to my liking. Before I was sent forward to the Antwerp lines I had some good experiences in spy-hunting, especially against the English agents.

"At first matters in Brussels were not very pleasant. We were lined up for the march into the town, and off we went with the regimental flags flying, the bands shrieking the 'Wacht am Rhein,' while behind us the Austrians bellowed 'Gott er halte Franz der Kaiser.' But one could feel that it was different from Louvain or Aerschot. In the uni-

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versity town we made our triumphal march through streets where one could almost hear the breaking of hearts. Every blind was drawn, and save for a few reckless loafers the streets were deserted. I think it was because of the so pronounced sorrow and resignation of the Louvain people that old Manteufel ordered the evacuation of the town and later sent in the Pioneers to burn up the houses.

"Before the burning Manteufel selected an awful night when the rain was falling in torrents, and ordered the evacuation to be completed in a few hours. I have since seen many things, but never anything to equal the clearing away of the population. Men, children, old women and babies just born could only escape destruction by flight. Whither they went no one knew or cared.

"It was just after we left the still burning town, over which a heavy pall of acrid smoke hung for weeks, that we ran into a troop of about twenty Belgian soldiers. They had been separated from their regiments when we defeated them at Tirlemont, and were evidently trying to regain their units. They immediately surrendered when they saw us, for we were a complete army, but von Manteufel said he had no time to send prisoners to the rear, and so we shot them. We had no time

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to bury them, for we were endeavouring to capture the Belgian General Staff, with their King, and so we had a forced march right through to Brussels, where we arrived only just too late.

"As I have already told you, something had happened to my head, and as no man could be then spared, I was attached to the Intelligence Department. Brussels was overrun with spies, not all German, and we had the duty of arresting suspects; most of them were shot without trial on the orders of the commanding officer. We had been delayed for a fortnight by the defence of the Belgians, and we had yet to smash Antwerp before capturing Paris. So you will understand that we had no time for field court martials, and, moreover, we knew they were guilty.

"Things seemed to be going bad for us before Antwerp. It was not long before we could hear the screeching of the guns, and then the wounded came in. Liège was left far behind.

"What I expected happened, and the day drew near when I, with the other convalescents, went out to the front. As we drew near the battle-line the stench became horrible. I was enrolled in my old regiment, and after a lot of skirmishing and wild fighting we were told off to rest, as

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we were to attempt to force the passage of the first river.

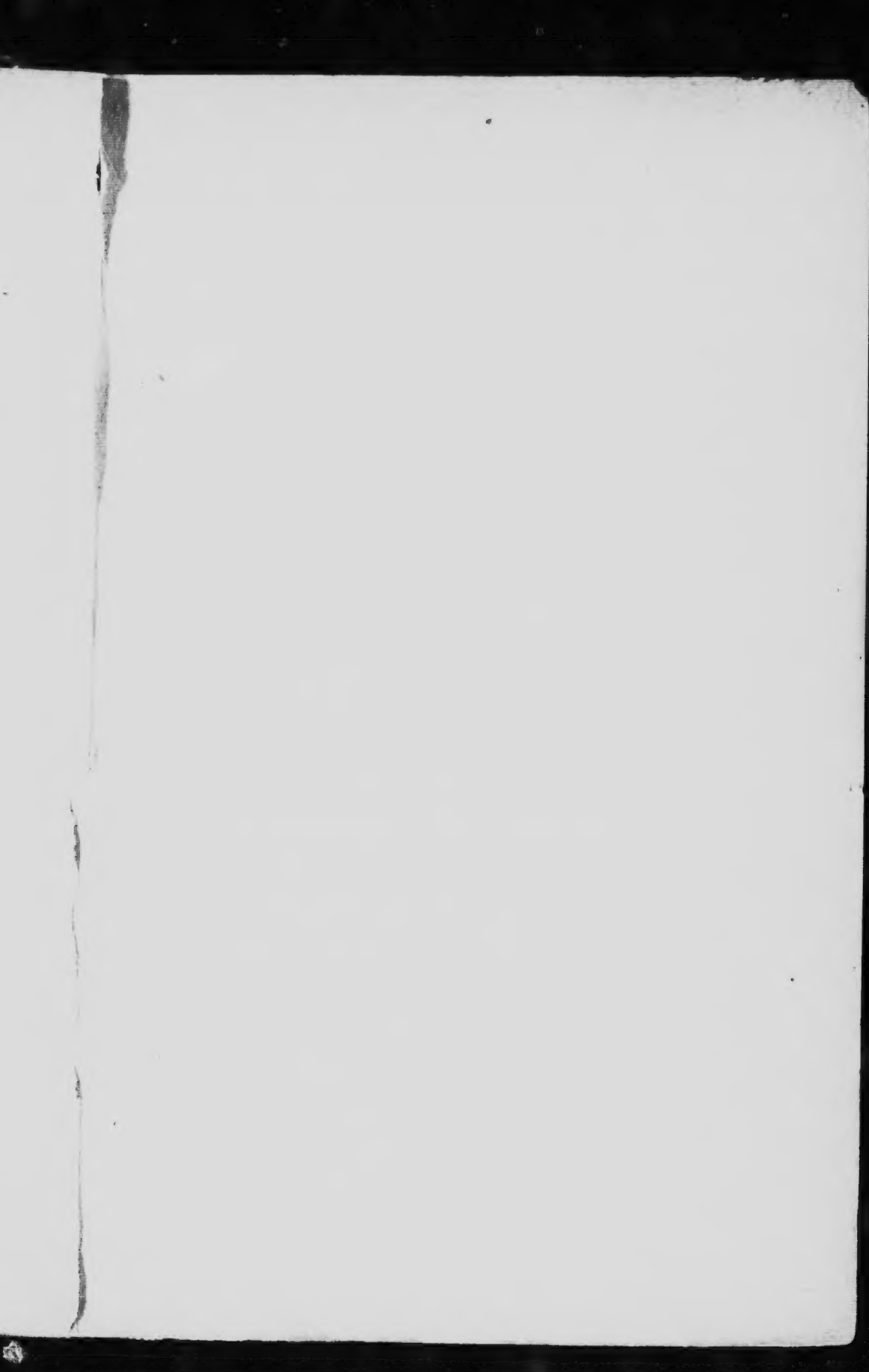
"Here the Belgians had erected semi-permanent field works. Before the attack we were liberally drugged, and then we marched out into the darkness. We could see the dangerous arms of the searchlights from the fortifications looking for us, but we fought right up to the river.

"We fought for years it seemed, and then we got across and into the fort. Before Antwerp, as before Liège, no quarter was given and no prisoners were taken, and the Belgians—most of them young boys that I could break in my hands—were every whit as bad. But we won, and then, while the long-distance guns began to drop their shells on us we fought each other. We were marched back under escort like a squad of prisoners, all that were left of us, and we fought again only in the last assault on the other works of Antwerp."

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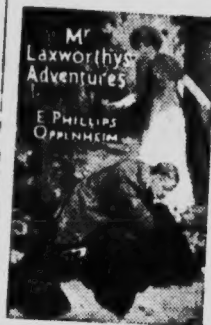
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